A Comparative Study of Mishima Yukio and Oscar Wilde: With Particular Reference to their Views of the Absolute

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Declaration

All work, unless otherwise acknowledged, is my own. This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

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Table of Contents

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Abstract

In this study, my aim is to bring a new perspective to the link between Mishima Yukio (1925-70), a post-war modern Japanese writer, and Oscar Wilde (1854-1900). Although as a young man Mishima appreciated Wilde's works, why did he write "Osukā Wairudo ron" [On Oscar Wilde] in which he expressed contempt for Wilde? From this starting-point, this thesis will study the similarities, parallels and differences between them and compare their views of the world and the Absolute. For the purposes of this thesis, the Absolute is understood as a constant existence which transcends human life.

Wilde's Irish background can be described as a significant factor in his philosophy. Some scholars have studied the Irish elements in Wilde's philosophy. However, to understand this fully, a more detailed investigation than has hitherto been produced, is necessary. His home country, Ireland, was a colony of England. This status includes a political and a religious aspect. His mother's role in his life also had great significance. In addition, it is impossible to ignore the influence of two crucial teachers of Wilde's, John Ruskin (1819-1900) and Walter Pater (1839-94). This thesis will examine his works and analyse how he formed his pluralistic viewpoint through the above influences. Moreover, his attitude towards the social conditions of the Victorian era also needs to be investigated. For example, Zolaism, which interpreted events as the results of environment and heredity, was a major social phenomenon and was reflected in the fictions in this period. Wilde was against this. This fact is perhaps useful in analysing Wilde's "individualism" in "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" (1891). Then I will examine what problems he faced because of his pluralistic viewpoint, and how Christianity, especially Roman Catholicism, became of great importance to him. An analysis of *De Profundis* will help to clarify Wilde's view of the Absolute in his later years.

When the development of Mishima's philosophy is analysed, many Wildean influences and parallel thinking with him can be found. For instance, Mishima says Wilde's *Salomé* left a strong impression on his mind. Based on this work of Wilde's, the development of Mishima's philosophy will be analysed. It will clarify his dualistic viewpoint formed through his experience during wartime and

afterwards, and through his visit to Greece. *Vijñaptimātratā*, one of the central ideas in Mahāyāna Buddhism, then influenced his philosophy. For example, when he wrote his final work, *Hōjō no umi* [The Sea of Fertility] (1969-71), he used *vijñaptimātratā* as the framework of the story. It integrated with the influence of oriental philosophies such as the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming and led him to a belief in the Japanese Emperor as the Absolute. My analysis will show that his suicide was brought about by this spiritual development of his. To understand his view of the Absolute, it is helpful to examine how he understood Wilde's view of the Absolute. Through a study of these steps, Mishima's particular view of the Absolute emerges.

Through comparing their perspectives in the manner outlined above, the similarities, parallels and differences in their spiritual and philosophical development will be investigated. In this process, underlying connections between them emerge, particularly through analysis of their views of the Absolute. Which aspects of Wilde's thinking Mishima sympathised with, and why he eventually disassociated himself from his influence, will then be highlighted. Only a few studies mention the link between them: the present study aims to highlight and deepen our understanding of this link.

Quoted Works

In this thesis, many quotations are taken from texts of Mishima's and Wilde's. These are very important references which demonstrate these two authors' philosophies and viewpoints. The titles of the quoted works are given below with information on the various editions and the year of first publication. When I quote from the Bible in connection with Wilde's writing, I use the King James Version, because Wilde himself used it.

Quoted Works: Mishima Yukio

Mishima Yukio zenshū [Complete Works of Mishima Yukio] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1973-76); translations are mine unless otherwise noted.
In the footnotes referring to Mishima in this thesis, *Works* means this edition.

"2.26 jiken to watashi" [The February 26th Incident and I]	1966
"Aporo no sakazuki" [Apollo's Cup]	1952
"Batsu ni kaete" [Substitution for Recommendation]	1944
"Bunka bōei ron" [A Treatise on Protecting Culture]	1968
"Damie garasu" [Stained Glass]	1940
"Dōgiteki kakumei no ronri" [The Logic of the Ethical Revolution]	1967
"Eirei no koe" [The Voice of the Brave Soldiers' Soul]	1966
"Gyōshō seika" [Hymns at the Morning Bell]	1938
"Hanazakari no mori" [The Forest in Full Bloom]	1941
"*Hōjō no umi* ni tsuite" [On *The Sea of Fertility*]	1969
"Issatsu no hon: Radige *Dorujeru haku no butōkai* " [One Book: On *Le Bal du comte d'Orgel* by Raymond Radiguet]	1963
"Jikokaizō no kokoromi" [An Attempt at Remodelling Myself]	1956
"Kakumei tetsugaku to shite no Yōmeigaku" [The Neo-Confucian Doctrines of Wang Yangming as a Philosophy of Revolution]	1970

"Kanpon *Gokuchūki:* Wairudo saku" [The Complete Edition of *De Profundis* by Wilde]	1951
"Kūhaku no yakuwari – Seishun no yakuwari" [The Role of the Blank – The Role of Youth]	1955
"*Kyōko no ie* soko de watashi ga kaita mono" [What I Wrote in *Kyōko's House*]	1959
Kyōko no ie [Kyōko's House]	1959
"Mishima Yukio: Saigo no kotoba" [Mishima Yukio: Final Words]	1970
"Mondai teiki (Nihonkoku kenpō)" [Problematic Points in the Japanese Constitution]	1976
"Odori" [Dance]	1963
"Ōmikotonori" [Words from the Emperor]	1942
"Osukā Wairudo ron" [On Oscar Wilde]	1950
"Radige ni tsukarete" [Fascinated by Radiguet]	1956
"Saikō no gizensha to shite – Kōtaishi denka e no tegami" [As the Complete Hypocrite: The Letter to the Crown Prince]	1952
"Shin Fasshizumu ron" [A Treatise on the New Fascism]	1954
"*Shiosai* shippitsu no koro" [The Days When I was Writing *The Sound of Waves]*	1965
"Shōsetsuka no kyūka" [A Novelist's Holidays]	1955
"Tabako" [A Cigarette]	1946
"Bi no katachi – *Kinkakuji* wo megutte" [The Form of Beauty: On *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*]	1957
"Tamaki haru" [The Tamaki Spring]	1942
"Tōzoku" [The Thieves]	1948
"Uta wa amaneshi" [Waka is Universal]	1942

"Wa ga miseraretaru mono" [The Attractions for me]	1956	
"Watashi no henreki jidai" [My Days of Itinerancy]	1963	
"Wattō *Shiteeru e no funade*" [*Embarkation for Cythera* by Watteau]	1954	
"Yoka zen'yō" [Spending My Free Time]	1959	
Confessions of a Mask [original title: *Kamen no kokuhaku*] (New York: New Directions, 1958).	1949	trans. Meredith Weatherby
"Patriotism" [original title: Yūkoku] (New York: New Directions, 1966).	1961	trans. Geoffrey W. Sargent
Runaway Horses [original title: *Honba*] (London: Vintage, 2000).	1968	trans. Michael Gallagher
Spring Snow [original title: *Haru no yuki*] (London: Vintage, 2000).	1967	trans. Michael Gallagher
The Decay of the Angel [original title: *Tennin gosui*] (London: Vintage, 2001).	1971	trans. Edward G. Seidensticker
The Sound of Waves [original title: *Shiosai*] (New York: Putnam, 1980).	1954	trans. Meredith Weatherby
The Temple of Dawn [original title: *Akatsuki no tera*] (London: Vintage, 2001).	1970	trans. E. Dale Saunders and Cecilia Segawa Seigle
The Temple of the Golden Pavilion [original title: *Kinkakuji*] (London: Vintage, 2001).	1956	trans. Ivan Morris

Quoted Works: Oscar Wilde

Robert Ross (ed.), *The First Collected Edition of the Works of Oscar Wilde, 15 Volumes* (London: Methuen and Co., 1908, rpt. Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1969).
In this thesis, *FCE* means this edition.

"A Chinese Sage"	1890
"Art and the Handcraftsman"	1882
"House Decoration"	1882

"L' Envoi"	1882
"Lecture to Art Students"	1883
"Salomé"	1891
"The Grosvenor Gallery"	1877

Collins Complete Works of Oscar Wilde: Centenary Edition (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1999). In the footnotes about Wilde in this thesis, *Works* means this edition.

"A Woman of no Importance"	1893
"De Profundis"	1897
"London Models"	1889
"The Critic as Artist"	1890
"The Decay of Lying"	1889
The Picture of Dorian Gray	1891
"The Portrait of Mr. W. H."	1889
"The Soul of Man Under Socialism"	1891
"The Truth of Masks"	1885

Bobby Fong and Karl Beckson (eds.), *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde,* Volume I (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
In this thesis, *CW* means this edition.

"Ravenna"	1878
"Rome Unvisited"	1875
"The Ballad of Reading Gaol"	1898
"The Burden of Itys"	1881

R. D. Pepper (ed.), *Irish Poets and Poetry of the Nineteenth Century* (San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1972).

"The Irish Poets of '48"	1882

Merlin Holland and Rupert Hart-Davis (eds.), *The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde* (London: Fourth Estate, 2000).
In this thesis, *Letters* means this edition.

Introduction

In Japan, there are many studies on Mishima Yukio[1] (1925-70) who was one of the post-war modern Japanese writers.[2] There are also many on Oscar Wilde (1854-1900). Mishima appreciated Wilde's works as a young man and must have been influenced by him, and a small number of studies exist that mention the link between these two writers. Their link can be analysed from various angles and may need to be researched in depth. I think that to study their link helps to uncover the similarities, parallels and differences between the two authors based on their cultural background.

It is said that when Matthew Arnold (1822-88) translated French work into English, in 1848 the term, *comparative*, was used first in the academic field of literature.[3] On the other hand, there is no record of when it started in Japan. However, Japanese authors have studied a great deal of material by non-Japanese authors. In Tokugawa period (1603-1867), western trade was forbidden because of the national isolation policy. Therefore, after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, to catch up with the western countries, the government earnestly encouraged the study of western cultures. For example, Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916) and Mori Ōgai (1862-1922), who were

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[1] Mishima Yukio's real name was Hiraoka Kimitake. He was born in Tokyo and began to write short stories in his junior high school days. During World War II, his first work, "Hanazakari no mori" [The Forest in Full Bloom], was published in *Bungei bunka* in 1942. After World War II, he wrote some novels and critical essays which target the fraud in Japanese society in the post-war period, such as *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* (1956) and *Kyōko no ie* (1959). His final novel, *Hōjō no umi* (1965-71), deals with Indian philosophy and Mahāyāna Buddhism. At that time, he also studied the Japanese emperor system, and formed a private army. In 1970 he attacked the headquarters of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces with the members of his private army. He insisted on the need to change the Japanese constitution and committed *harakiri*.

[2] Some studies by Western scholars have also been published, for example, those of Mishima's friends, Donald Keene and Henry Scott-Stokes: Donald Keene, "Mishima Yukio", *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era, Fiction* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984); and Henry Scott-Stokes, *The Life and Death of Yukio Mishima* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1974). In addition, there are treatises by other scholars such as Marguerite Yourcenar: *Mishima, ou, La vision du vide* [Mishima, or, a Vision of the Void] (Paris: Gallimard, 1980); and Roy Starrs, *Deadly Dialectics: Sex, Violence and Nihilism in the World of Yukio Mishima* (Folkestone: Japan Library, 1994). However, there are many misunderstandings in Starrs' work, which are perhaps brought out by the English translations of Mishima's works. Inoue Takashi and Kakuchi Yukio examine this point in Starrs' treatise: Inoue Takashi, "Deadly Dialectics – Roy Starrs shi no Mishima ron" [A Treatise on Mishima by Mr. Roy Starrs], *Kokubun Shirayuri,* Vol. 30, March 1999 (Tokyo: Shirayuri University Press, 1999), pp. 80-2; and Kakuchi Yukio, "Kaigai no Kenkyū no Dōkō: Eigo ken" [Directions of Study on Mishima in the Foreign Countries: English Speaking Countries], Matsumoto Tōru and others (eds.), *Mishima Yukio jiten* [Encyclopaedia of Mishima Yukio] (Tokyo: Benseishuppan, 2000), p. 664.

[3] René Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), p. 46.

two of the most important modern Japanese authors of the Meiji period (1868-1912), stayed in foreign countries in their youth as official overseas students. Natsume lived in London from 1900 until 1903 and wrote some short stories set in Britain.[4] Mori spent time in Berlin from 1884 until 1888, then he wrote a German trilogy in Japan.[5] Modern Japanese literature is conventionally held to have started in this period, after they introduced the western concepts, such as self and egoism. As this demonstrates, modern Japanese literature has been influenced by foreign culture and literature since that time. Then, influenced by Auguste Rodin's (1840-1917) idea, the modern Japanese writers of the White Birch School (*Shirakaba-ha*)[6] attempted to introduce western humanism through their works and social activities. Moreover, Zolaism[7] was imported and transfigured into Japanese naturalism (*Shizenshugi*) in the works of Tayama Katai (1871-1930) and Shimazaki Tōson (1872-1943) in the late Meiji period.

In Mishima's case, it is also possible to indicate that he was greatly influenced by some foreign authors and thinkers. Especially in his earlier years he traced their style and the atmosphere created within their works to form his own style. Firstly, Raymond Radiguet (1903-1923)[8] deserves mention as a foreign writer who influenced him. When Mishima first read his novel, *Le Bal du comte d'Orgel* [Count d'Orgel],[9] he was fourteen or fifteen years old. That book then became a Bible for him for a long time. At that time, possibly he was fascinated by Radiguet's early death and

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[4] After his return, in 1906, Natsume Sōseki published *Rondon tō* [London Tower] which was a collection of short pieces. It is composed of some stories set in Britain such as "Rondon tō" [London Tower] (1905) and "Maboroshi no tate" [The Shield of the Phantom] (1906).

[5] Mori Ōgai presented three short stories set in Germany. They were "Maihime" [The Dancing Queen] (1890), "Utakata no ki" [A Record of Babbling] (1890) and "Fumi dukai" [The Messenger] (1891).

[6] The White Birch School was a literary school in late Meiji period and Taishō period (1912-25). Through their monthly magazine, *Shirakaba*, they insisted on the importance of humanism and became the centre of the literary world at that time. Mushanokōji Saneatsu (1885-1976), Arishima Takeo (1878-1923) and Shiga Naoya (1883-1971) were the main writers of this school.

[7] Zolaism is a literary theory based on the work of a French author, Émile Zola (1840-1902). It sets a realistic description of the dark side of society at the centre and emphasises that environment and heredity decide personality.

[8] Raymond Radiguet was born in Saint Maur, some eight miles from Paris. His father was a cartoonist. Radiguet's childhood and education are not clear. At the age of sixteen, he became a member of Dadaist and Cubist circles, and met Jean Cocteau. In 1923 his first novel, *Le Diable au corps* [The Devil in the Flesh], was published under the title, *Cœur vert*. Its bold freshness and scandalous character astonished readers. He caught typhoid fever in 1923 and died at the age of twenty. The following year, his final novel, *Le Bal du comte d'Orgel*, was published.

[9] Influenced by Madame de La Fayette's novel, *La Princesse de Clèves* [The Princess of Cleves] (1677), Radiguet wrote this novel. The protagonist, François de Séryuse, falls in love with Countess d'Orgel. She feels guilty and confesses it to her husband. François is also afflicted that he betrays his friend, Count d'Orgel. He leaves Paris, and Countess d'Orgel becomes a nun. The psychological analysis of the characters by the narrator is probably the main theme of the novel.

the plot of his works. Mishima describes Radiguet's works as "the story about a boy who is keen to become an adult early."[10] This is the first time he was influenced by Radiguet. Then Mishima analysed Radiguet's works and tried to use his method in his works. For example, he says, "I wrote *Tōzoku* [The Thieves (1948)] as the final settlement of my experiences about Radiguet."[11]

Friedrich W. Nietzsche (1844-1900) also had a huge influence on Mishima. Mishima had been reading Nietzsche's works since his high school days and accepted many of his ideas. Through his reading, the most important influence was the concept of the Dionysiac.[12] This is seen in many of Mishima's works. For example, how he describes young people's joy when they carry a *Mikoshi*, which is a mini-shrine, in *Kamen no kokuhaku* [Confessions of a Mask] (1949) may be regarded as an example of the Dionysiac. A similar description is found in his critical essay, "Taiyō to tetsu" [Sun and Steel] (1965). It is possible that his reference given below, which shows his aim in his short story, "Yūkoku" [Patriotism] (1961), exhibits this influence of the Dionysiac:

> Choosing a place for their death becomes choosing the best joy of living immediately. This rare night is their very joy. In addition, there is not a shadow of defeat. Their love will reach purification and ecstasy. Killing themselves here equates to honourable death in war. It is the military officer's very action which links righteousness as a soldier.[13]

Moreover, in a study published in 1981, Sadoya Shigenobu investigates Mishima's works in detail from the perspective of nihilism.[14] In this study, he attempts to explain the connection between the Dionysiac and nihilism in Mishima's works. Tasaka Kō has also analysed Mishima's works, using *The Birth of Tragedy* as a key.[15] Tasaka reports on the influence of Nietzsche's concept of the Dionysiac on Mishima's works. For example, in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche discusses the Dionysian

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[10] Mishima, "Shōsetsuka no kyūka", *Works* 27, p. 103.
[11] Mishima, "Jikokaizō no kokoromi", *Works* 27, p. 285.
[12] In *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), Nietzsche defined the principle of individualisation as "Apollonic". Then he described the ecstasy of uniting with a fundamental existence beyond "Apollonic" as "Dionysiac".
[13] Mishima, "2.26 jiken to watashi", *Works* 32, p.360.
[14] Sadoya Shigenobu, *Mishima Yukio ni okeru seiyō* [Western World within Mishima Yukio] (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 1981).
[15] Tasaka Kō, *Mishima Yukio ron* [A Treatise on Mishima Yukio] (Tokyo: Fūtōsha, 1970), pp. 40-1.

festivals as follows:

> In nearly every instance the centre of these festivals lay in extravagant sexual licentiousness, the waves of which overwhelmed all family life and its venerable traditions; the very wildest beasts of nature were let loose here, including that detestable mixture of lust and cruelty which has always seemed to me the genuine "witches' draught".[16]

Tasaka points out the similarity of theme in Mishima's description of the Japanese festival in his novel, *Confessions of a Mask*, which is given below:

> The plaintive melody of a chant, in which individual words only gradually became distinguishable, pierced through the confused tumult of the festival, proclaiming what might be called the true theme of this outwardly purposeless uproar – a seeming lamentation for the extremely vulgar mating of humanity and eternity, which could be consummated only through some such pious immorality as this.[17]

I think, in terms of the Dyonisiac, this issue is linked to Wilde's view which admired the martyrdom of St. Sebastian.[18] In addition, the studies above demonstrate that one aspect of Mishima's admiration of Greece arose from his understanding of the Dionysiac. Admiration of Greece was also important for Wilde. These parallels demonstrate the necessity to examine Wilde's influence on Mishima's philosophy.

On the other hand, Wilde displays a connection with nihilism through Zhuangzi (Chuang Tzŭ). The starting-point of nihilism is to perceive the worthlessness of everything in this world. Zhuangzi also put the theme, all that exists in this world changes, at the centre of his philosophy. Wilde wrote a book review, "A Chinese Sage" (1890).[19] In this work, he analyses Zhuangzi's philosophy and discusses two main points. The first is returning to Tao which is truth as the origin of everything in the mortal world. The second is destroying the social system which restricts people's liberty of spirit. The former is related to his sense of art, and the latter has something to

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[16] Friedrich Nietzche, "The Birth of Tragedy", Oscar Levy (ed.), *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche,* Vol. 3 (London and Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis, 1909), p. 30.
[17] Mishima, *Confessions of a Mask*, p. 30.
[18] Wilde likened his esteemed poet, John Keats, to St. Sebastian in his sonnet. Oscar Wilde, "The Grave of Keats", *CW*, p.36.
[19] Wilde, "A Chinese Sage", *Reviews, FCE*, p. 528. This book review is of the translation of Zhuangzi by Herbert A. Giles, *Chuang Tzu* (London: Bearnard Quaritch, 1889).

do with his view of English society in the nineteenth century and his politics. These themes will be dealt with in Chapter 4 of this thesis. As "Vera, or the Nihilists" (1880) demonstrates, before writing the book review, Wilde had had a similar attitude to Zhuangzi's. As stated, Mishima was influenced by Nietzsche. Therefore, in terms of nihilism, the reflection between Mishima and Wilde can be traced.

Mishima was also influenced by Wilde. He states that *Salomé* was the first literary work which he read.[20] When he saw the opera, *Salomé*, on the stage in New York in 1952, he wrote, "the opera which I love".[21] In addition, he directed the play in Tokyo in 1960.[22] These facts show his very positive views of Wilde. Specifically, he wrote a treatise whose title is "Osukā Wairudo ron" [On Oscar Wilde].[23] In addition, when Mishima speaks of his love for Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's (1886-1965) works[24] in his early days, he says, "I have no clear memory how I transferred my interest from Wilde to Tanizaki."[25] It is said that Tanizaki greatly influenced Mishima. However, as far as reading his reference, Wilde's influence on him seems to be prior to Tanizaki's. Through considering these facts, it should be said that their link is very crucial in the study of Mishima.

As was said, there has not been much research into the link between Mishima and Wilde; some interesting points, however, have been raised about this theme. Imura Kimie analyses Wilde's play, *Salomé*, referring to its actual setting on the stage and to the moon's changing colour in it.[26] Her remark that the moon predicts the next scene, can be a clue for studying the link between Mishima and Wilde. Horie Tamaki minutely analyses Mishima's treatise on Wilde and clarifies the fact that much

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[20] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 335.
[21] Mishima, "Aporo no sakazuki", *Works* 26, p. 30.
[22] It was played by Bungakuza [the Literary Theatre]. Kishida Kyōko, an actress, acted the role of *Salomé*.
[23] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 335.
[24] Tanizaki Jun'ichirō was a modern Japanese novelist and critic. He loved Wilde's works and translated *Lady Windermere's Fan* into Japanese. *Windamiya kyō fujin no ōgi* (Tokyo: Tenyūsha, 1919). The world of Tanizaki's early works is called demonic and its mood is regarded as similar to Wilde. For example, in his short story, "Shisei" [Tattoo], a tattoo artist tattoos a big spider in the decadent mood on a young girl's back. After that, her pure personality changes into a voluptuous personality. It can be said that this plot is based on Tanizaki's understanding of Wilde's view of art which is symbolised by his phrase, "Life imitates art," in his critical art essay, "The Decay of Lying".
[25] Mishima Yukio, "Radige ni tsukarete", *Works* 27, p. 211.
[26] Imura Kimie, *Sarome no hen'yō* [Transfiguration of Salomé] (Tokyo: Shinshokan, 1990). She also pointed out a similar point in "Sarome no tsuki no shinwa" [The Myth of the Moon in Salomé], *Yuriika* [Eureka], September 1980 (Tokyo: Seidosha, 1980). A similar reference is found in Rodney Shewan *Oscar Wilde: Art and Egotism* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1977).

information in Mishima's came from André Gide's (1869-1951) writing, especially *L' Immoraliste* [The Immoralist] (1902).[27] This novel seems to use Wilde's personality and character as Gide remembered them or wanted to remember them. Takakuwa Noriko also analyses this treatise on Wilde by Mishima and points out that their common assertion is that "beauty has to be visible".[28] The aim of this study was to introduce Mishima to beginners, so it does not have any detailed interpretation. However, Takakuwa's analysis helps to illuminate the issue of what art meant for Wilde, and what the act of describing objects meant for Mishima. Sadoya's work[29] is a primary study which deals with Mishima from the perspective of comparative literature. He compared Mishima with the Marquis de Sade, Radiguet, Walter Pater, Wilde and ten other western writers and thinkers. This has been a basic point of departure for discussing Mishima in the field of comparative literature. However, it is also true that the concepts referred to in most studies of comparative literature on Mishima, such as the paradigm of romanticism and Georges Bataille's eroticism, have been stereotyped. Perhaps it is necessary to amend these concepts from a new point of view.

These studies suggest many interesting points, but they are too fragmentary. It is also necessary to investigate their link comprehensively from a broader perspective. For example, Saeki Shōichi refers to this aspect of Mishima's treatise, "Osukā Wairudo ron":

> In addition, although this study on Oscar Wilde was written in his mid-twenties, its content offers insight into his views during the rest of his life and the manner of his death.[30]

This study suggests Mishima's stance never changed after writing "Osukā Wairudo ron". Most other studies show that the influence of Wilde on Mishima exists only in his early works. Consequently, Saeki's point is very interesting. It must require further research.

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[27] Horie Tamaki, *Bara no sadizumu* [Sadism of the Rose] (Tokyo: Eichōsha, 1992).
[28] Takakuwa Noriko, "Wairudo" [Wilde], Miyoshi Yukio (ed.), *Mishima Yukio hikkei* [The Handbook: Mishima Yukio] (Tokyo: Gakutōsha, 1983), p. 25.
[29] Sadoya, *Mishima Yukio ni okeru seiyō.*
[30] Saeki Shōichi, "Shinwa wo ikita otoko" [A Man Who Lived a Myth], *Yuriika* [Eureka] September 1980, p. 83. This "Man" means Oscar Wilde.

In this study, my aim is to bring a new perspective to the link between Mishima and Wilde from a new point of view. Although as a young man Mishima appreciated Wilde's works,[31] why did he write "Osukā Wairudo ron" in which he expressed contempt for Wilde? From this beginning, it is intended to study the similarities, parallels and differences between them and to compare their views of the world and the Absolute. For the purpose of this thesis, the Absolute is understood as a constant existence which transcends human life. In other words, it is the transcendent existence which is independent of the changeable phenomena in this world. In addition, the Absolute is the source of everything. Therefore, it corresponds to the word, *zettaisha*, in Japanese. (This issue will be investigated in detail in Part IV, using their works.)

When Wilde's formation of his view of the Absolute is analysed, the most significant factor in his view is Christianity, especially Roman Catholicism. In conventional Western Christian thought, for Wilde, the Absolute was God, and Christ is the Son of God. Some scholars such as Guy Willoughby[32] and George Wilson[33] have studied Christianity in Wilde's philosophy. However, to understand this fully, I think it is necessary to investigate his background more. His home country, Ireland, was a colony of England. This status includes a political and a religious aspect. His mother's role in his life also had a large significance. As Richard Allen Cave states, his background was of great importance, and a more detailed investigation of it than has hitherto been produced, is necessary.[34] In addition, it is impossible to ignore the influence of two crucial teachers for Wilde, John Ruskin (1819-1900) and Walter Pater (1839-94). Moreover, his attitude towards the social circumstances of the Victorian era will need to be analysed. For example, Zolaism, which interpreted events as results of environment and heredity, was a major social phenomenon and was reflected in the fictions in this period. Wilde was against this, and similar ways of thinking are found

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[31] Mishima, "Watashi no henreki jidai", *Works* 30, p. 427.
[32] Guy Willoughby, *Art and Christhood, the Aesthetics of Oscar Wilde* (London: Cranbury, NJ, Associated University Press, 1993).
[33] Knight George Wilson, *The Christian Renaissance, with Interpretations of Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe and New Discussions of Oscar Wilde and the Gospel of Thomas* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, rpt.1981, 1962).
[34] Richard Allen Cave, "Wilde's Plays, some lines of influence", Peter Raby (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Oscar Wilde* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997), p. 219.

in Aldous Huxley's study[35] and P. D. Ouspensky's treatise.[36] This fact is perhaps useful in analysing Wilde's "individualism" in "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" (1891). Then to analyse *De Profundis*[37] helps to clarify Wilde's view of the Absolute in his later years.

When the development of Mishima's philosophy is analysed, many factors are found, as in Wilde's case. Influences from his visit to Greece can be detected in his works such as "Manatsu no shi" [Death in Midsummer] (1953) and *Shiosai* [The Sound of Waves] (1954). Moreover, *vijñaptimātratā*, which is one of the central ideas in Mahāyāna Buddhism, also influenced his view of the Absolute. For example, when he wrote his final work, *Hōjō no umi* [The Sea of Fertility] (1969-71), he used *vijñaptimātratā* as a framework of the story. Perhaps his suicide also had a close connection with this idea. To understand his view of the Absolute, it is necessary to study the manner in which, amongst other things, he assimilated Wilde's view with this idea. In addition, the influence of oriental philosophies such as the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming will be investigated. For example, Matsuda Osamu discusses the uniqueness of Japanese chivalry in the work of Mishima.[38] When researching Mishima's philosophy in detail, it is also necessary to study his ideas on the Japanese Emperor. After World War II, in 1946, the Emperor declared that he was a human being.[39] As Mishima developed his philosophy, he sensed a discomfort at the declaration. For example, in his short story, "Eirei no koe" [The Voice of the Brave Soldiers' Soul] (1966), he depicts the dead soldiers' groan, "Why did the Emperor

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[35] Aldous Huxley, *Do What You Will* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1929), pp. 273, 278.
[36] P. D. Ouspensky, *The Psychology of Man's Possible Evolution and The Cosmology of Man's Possible Evolution* (East Sussex: Agora Books, 1989), p. 9.
[37] *De Profundis* is a long letter, which was written in prison, to Lord Alfred Douglas. The title, *De Profundis* was given by Wilde's friend and literary executor, Robert Ross, when it was published in 1905 after Wilde's death. When a German translation of the revised version of this work was published in 1925, it was given another title, *Epistola: In Carcere et Vinculis* [Letter: In Prison and Chains] based on Wilde's phrase in his letter to Ross on 1 April 1897.
[38] Matsuda Osamu, "Bunbu ryōdō no shisō" [Thought of Literary and Military Arts], *Kokubungaku*, December 1976 (Tokyo: Gakutōsha, 1976), p. 150.
[39] By means of a national radio broadcast called Ningen-sengen [Declaration of Human Being], Hirohito (the Shōwa Emperor) renounced his divinity and declared that Japan's sovereignty rested with the people. Through the imperial history, which had been taught at Japanese schools before and during World War II, people had learned that the Emperor was the descendent of the sun goddess, Amaterasu. This belief strongly influenced the code of values of Japanese people in the pre-war period and in the wartime. For example, soldiers were sent to the front line in the name of the Emperor, when World War II happened. In addition, their equipment, such as the guns and the uniforms, had the mark of the chrysanthemum which is the crest of the imperial family. Therefore, we can understand that this declaration shocked people and caused a great change in the code of values.

become a human being?"[40] Moreover, he showed his disapproval of the Emperor after the declaration in the dialogue with Furubayashi Takashi which was held immediately before his suicide in 1970.[41] Consequently, he was uncomfortable with the present Emperor system of Japan which is based on the Emperor's declaration. He also stated, "[The Emperor's] personality as a human being is only secondary;"[42] and used the word, "the impersonal Emperor".[43] Judging from his comment that the present Emperor should directly link with his ancestors,[44] he seemed to think that the Emperor transcended worldly reality despite appearing to have human characteristics such as being born and expected to die. We can say that this understanding of Mishima's is related to his *honkadori*[45] illustration.[46] He addressed the notion that an original waka and a new waka created through *honkadori* have different poetic worlds but they have the same source. In fact, they are different but they are one. He regards this as important to understand the core idea of the Japanese culture. I think this viewpoint of his connected with his understanding of the Emperor. Each Emperor dies as an individual but, through succession, the Emperor continues to exist permanently although incarnated in different people. Through a study of these steps, his particular view of the Absolute emerges.

Mishima's view of the Absolute, which considered the Emperor the Absolute, was probably influenced by Japanese education before World War II. It was based on imperial history. However, it should be noted that Mishima was not a mere follower of the cult of the Emperor. He always refused the right-wing people's offers of interview. Perhaps he intended to distance himself from ultra-nationalists.[47]

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[40] Mishima, "Eirei no koe", *Works* 17, p. 563.
[41] Mishima, "Mishima Yukio: Saigo no kotoba", *Works Appendix,* Volume 1, p. 681.
[42] *loc. cit.*
[43] *loc. cit.*
[44] *ibid.*, p. 682.
[45] *Honkadori,* an allusive variation, is a traditional technique to create *waka,* which is one of the classic forms of Japanese poetry. One draws heavily on phrases and words from classic, popular *waka* to create a new *waka.* As a result, one can enrich the idea in one's new *waka* using the original *waka* as a resource. This is distinguished from plagiarism, because there is originality in the choice of allusion and how it is introduced in the new poem.
[46] Mishima Yukio, "*Kokinshū* to *Shin-kokinshū*" [*Collection of Waka, Old and New* and *New Collection of Waka, Old and New*], *Works* 32, pp. 579-82.
[47] In the post-war period in Japan, the right wingers' assertions mainly aim at changing political systems and diplomatic tacks of the government. For example, whenever the Emperor visits Asian countries, which have sad histories caused by Japanese occupation during World War II, the Japanese Diet discusses whether or not the Emperor should apologize to them officially. Some ultra-nationalists complain that this unstable attitude of the Japanese government is weak-kneed diplomacy. In fact, in

Moreover, in his critical essays in his late years, he frequently used the word, "the Emperor as a cultural concept". Therefore, I will analyse the philosophical meaning of the Emperor for Mishima in this thesis.

Wilde was baptised a Roman Catholic on his deathbed. On the other hand, Mishima regarded the Japanese Emperor as his Absolute. This difference in their views seems to be of great importance in studying the link between them because their views are connected with their final position and their death. Their views of the Absolute will be the main points which highlight Mishima's ambivalent attitude towards Wilde. During World War II, it was banned to learn western culture including literature and criticism. However, after the end of the war, various kinds of western ideas rushed into Japan all at once. In the chaos of defeat, Japanese traditional thinking based on imperial history was fundamentally examined from objective viewpoints. In this process, the issue between Japanese culture and Christianity was dealt with by modern Japanese writers, such as Endō Shūsaku (1923-96)[48] and Shimao Toshio (1917-86).[49] They were Mishima's contemporaries. Therefore, I think, it is worth while analysing Wide's view of the Absolute and Mishima's understanding of it. How they arrived at their own views of the Absolute will be examined through an analysis of their works. To study their views of the Absolute, their own works are of course the most important sources. In addition, some factors such as Wilde's Irish background or social conditions in Japan after World War II help to illuminate their views. These materials will be used effectively to analyse their views which were composed of various complex elements.

Through comparing their perspectives in the manner outlined above, I hope to examine the underlying link between them. In studying the similarities,

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their political and diplomatic context, they regard the Emperor as important. On the other hand, as I will discuss in the later part of the thesis, in his study on the natural state of worldly reality, Mishima found the great importance of the Emperor as the Absolute. Thus, I think Mishima started his research on the Emperor from his cultural, philosophical viewpoint rather than the political or diplomatic. This was different from the right wingers' approach.

[48] Endō Shūsaku was baptised at the age of ten. As a Japanese Catholic writer, he examined the Japanese people's reception of Christianity. His novel, *Chinmoku* [Silence] described the Japanese martyrs and conversion from Christianity in Tokugawa period.

[49] Shimao Toshio was a Catholic writer who was baptised in 1956. Through depicting his experience as a kamikaze pilot (a suicide attacker) and the constant attention for his heavily sick wife, he intended to understand his destiny as set by divine will. The title of his novel, *Ware fukaki fuchi yori* [From the Depth] (1955), is derived from the phrase in Psalms 130:1. Wilde's friend, Robert Ross, titled Wilde's long letter, *De Profundis* (1897), from the same part of the Bible. For further detail of this issue, see footnote 37.

parallels and differences between them, their spiritual transition and the development of their philosophies will be investigated. In the process of this investigation, the points where Mishima sympathised with Wilde and where he broke away from him will be highlighted. As was said in this introduction, in the research into the link between Mishima and Wilde there is a wide area which has been left untouched. Therefore, I hope that this study will contribute to improving our understanding of these two writers and the relationship between Japanese and Western literature.

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Part I: The Connection between Mishima and Wilde

In his treatise, "Osukā Wairudo ron" (1950), Mishima analyses his interest in Wilde and criticises Wilde's philosophy. However, it is also true that he had been fascinated by Wilde for a long time. For example, he says, "Although Wilde is out of date already and is far less popular, he has been the object of my interest for a long time."[1] What is it in Wilde which attracted Mishima? In the same treatise, Mishima stated, "I will not concern myself with any writers and their works without physical yearning."[2] Because of this provocative sentence, it is possible to interpret their link as a kind of homosexuality. However, I think that this is too simplistic an interpretation and it means being caught in the trap set by a mere impression of their works such as *The Picture of Dorian Grey* (1890) by Wilde and *Confessions of a Mask* by Mishima. Regarding this issue, Alan Sinfield says, "Wilde and his writings look queer because our stereotypical notion of male homosexuality derives from Wilde, and our ideas about him."[3] If we persist in the viewpoint of homosexuality, it distorts proper understanding of their link. What does Mishima's statement mean? What is their essential link? In this part, I will investigate what the young Mishima found in Wilde's works in his early days as a presupposition to studying the link between them.

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[1] Mishima, "Osukā Warudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 335.
[2] *loc. cit.*
[3] Alan Sinfield, *The Wilde Century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde, and the Queer Moment* (London: Cassell, 1994), p. vii.

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Chapter 1. Mishima's Early Works and Wilde' s Influence

When one researches Mishima's activity as a writer, one sees some turning points. The most important one was the end of World War II. This is a very important milestone in Japanese history, as was the Great Famine in Ireland in 1848. Most people experienced terror in their lives and had their code of values shaken by a foreign one. It was one of the turning points of a period. However, at the same time, it can be thought that visiting Greece in 1952 also had a great significance for him. It has been called "the foundation of Mishima's works".[4] Therefore, when development of his philosophy is researched, the transformations of his philosophy there cannot be ignored. However, to define his change after visiting Greece, it is necessary to analyse his spiritual position before that visit. In this chapter, his spiritual position will be examined through his early works.

1.1. Mishima's Romanticism in the Context of Japanese Romanticism

There are many studies which regard Mishima as a romanticist.[5] However, the formation of his romanticism had many aspects and many elements. In this part, I intend to put them in order, and analyse his romanticism.

First of all, the causes for Mishima's romantic tendency can be found in his background. His grandmother, Natsu, loved him very much as her first grandson, and he was made to spend most of his time with her during his childhood. At that time, even his friends, who were all girls, were chosen by his grandmother. She had encouraged him to spend his time with pictures and books. Following his grandmother's advice, Mishima read Japanese classics such as *Ōkagami* [The Big Mirror] and *Ise monogatari* [Tales of Ise]. In addition, he loved *Kabuki* which is one genre of traditional Japanese stage drama.[6] When Mishima was a junior high school

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[4] Sadoya, *Mishima Yukio ni okeru seiyō*, p. 62.

[5] Tasaka, *Mishima Yukio ron*; Isoda Kōichi, *Junkyō no bigaku* [The Aesthetics of the Martyrdom] (Tokyo: Tōjusha, 1964); and Tanaka Miyoko, *Roman shugisha wa akutō ka?* [Is a Romanticist the Rascal?] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1970).

[6] *Kabuki* is one of the styles of Japanese classical drama. The actors paint special patterns on their faces,

student, he wrote his criticism of *Kabuki* in his notebooks.[7] It demonstrates his wide-ranging knowledge of *Kabuki* and his ability to appreciate things of beauty. These facts show us the great effect his grandmother had on him. He was made to stay away from the real world and lived in an artificial world, especially one of books. Therefore, it is no wonder that he did not clearly distinguish between worldly reality and the world of dreams. There is an example from "Damie garasu" [The Stained Glass] (1940), which is a short story and one of his earliest works.[8]

> I will find the white hat of hers which will be waving and coming to me in the morning mists. Pretending that I cannot see her, I will come close to her. Being enveloped in milky haze, the cows will be milked in the meadow. Seeing my face, she will feel strange and will know soon that I am playing a play. With a little anger, she will twist her lips. Ignoring her, I will pass her.[9]

This quotation lies mostly in the hero's imagination. His imagination can be said excessive. In this work, there are many ideas which exist only in his imagination. They are mixed with the facts, which he experienced, without any clear borders. When Mishima wrote it, he was fifteen years old. This quotation is one of the pieces of evidence that he did not distinguish between worldly reality and illusion in his works.

In those days, Mishima's romanticism had focused on his love for Japanese classics. As mentioned above, from his childhood he had grown up with the classics. When he entered junior high school at the age of twelve, he met Shimizu Fumio (1903-98), a scholar of Japanese classics. Shimizu advised him to read a poem by Yasuda Yojūrō (1910-81). We may say that this is the first point where his romanticism turned to the Japanese classics in earnest. Before World War II, there was

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and their actions are considerably stylised. I quote the general explanation of *Kabuki* from *Nihon marugoto jiten*. "*Kabuki* originated in the early Edo period, when a woman called Okuni of Izumo performed a Buddhist dance in an unusual costume in Kyōto. The dance was later deemed morally unacceptable, and women were prohibited from performing it. Instead, only adult men were allowed to perform. This custom has been maintained in present-day *Kabuki*." International Internship Programs (ed.), *Nihon marugoto jiten* [Japan at a Glance] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1997), p. 110.

[7] Mishima Yukio, *Mishima Yukio shibai nikki* [Mishima Yukio's Dramatic Criticisms] (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1991).

[8] The outline of this short story is this: The protagonist, Kennosuke, goes to live with his uncle, Baron Munakata, a retired officer. Kennosuke meets Satomi Noriko who is a daughter of Munakata's friend, and he falls in love with her. Munakata harbours ill feeling against their youth. However, Munakata's wife Akiko remembers her good old days with her husband through happiness of this young couple, and thinks that she grows young again. Although Munakata cannot share his wife's sense with her, he understands her. At the end of the novel, he listens to her voice with young and fresh sense.

[9] Mishima, "Damie garasu", *Works* 1, p. 123. In this episode, Kennosuke imagines that he comes upon

a literary magazine, *Nihon rōman ha*, published from 1935 to 1938. This magazine was at the centre of the movement known as Japanese Romanticism and associated with nationalism. The members of this movement criticised the rushed Westernization of Japan after the Meiji Restoration in 1868 and appreciated Japanese classics such as *Man'yōshū* [Ten Thousand Leaves] (8C) and *Kokin wakashū* [Collection of Waka, Old and New] (10C). Yasuda was the editorial leader of this magazine and also of this movement. His poems draw on Japanese classics, and Mishima was impressed by them.[10] These poems resonated with Mishima's knowledge of Japanese classics stored deep down within himself since his childhood. As a result, Mishima used some phrases from Japanese classics in his works and was very interested in *Kokin wakashū* which was very much appreciated by the members of the Japanese Romantic movement.[11] Consequently, although Mishima did not become directly involved with the magazine, *Nihon rōman ha*, he had been influenced by Japanese Romanticism.[12]

After the publication of *Nihon rōman ha* ceased, a new literary magazine was established to continue its aims. The title of this new magazine was *Bungei bunka* (1938-44). Shimizu was one of the contributors to this magazine. He recommended Mishima's short story, "Hanazakari no mori" [The Forest in Full Bloom], and it was printed in the first issue in 1941. From this time, he began to use the penname, "Mishima Yukio", so this was the start of his life as a writer. After that, his other works were printed in this magazine. The influence of Japanese Romanticism can be seen in some classical words and phrases from Japanese classics in Mishima's works, for example, *enishi* (destiny), *ōkimi* (emperor), *ōmiyo* (period).[13] However, although *Bungei bunka* had similar aims to *Nihon rōman ha*, the difference in character between these magazines was clear. In the declaration for the first issue of *Bungei bunka*, Ikeda Tsutomu, who was on one of the editorial panels, says that it is no longer necessary for

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her near Munakata's summer house.

[10] Mishima, "Watashi no henreki jidai", *Works* 30, p. 427.

[11] In "Uta wa amaneshi" Mishima analysed *Kokin wakashū* and appreciated it. Mishima, "Uta wa amaneshi", *Works* 1, p. 223.

[12] Therefore, when he used Japanese Romanticism as a term in his works, it did not mean the literary magazine but the movement. For example, he discusses Japanese Romanticism in *Watashi no henreki jidai* (1964), but there is no reference to that magazine. Mishima, "Watashi no henreki jidai" *Works* 30, p. 427. Japanese Romanticism was the movement to revive the study of ancient Japanese thought and culture. It also appreciated the traditional concepts such as refinement (*miyabi*) and sensitivity to nature (*aware*) in Japanese classics and aimed to put them into the centre of the literary works. It appeared in wartime, so it had a nationalistic side. At the same time, it was based on an eschatological view.

[13] We can see these words in "Hanazakari no mori", *Works* 1, p. 131.

them to talk about classics, all that they have to do is let classics speak to the people.[14] The members of that magazine acknowledged the value of Japanese classics in Japanese society in wartime and intended to study the meaning of World War II from the perspective of classics.

Mishima's works written during World War II demonstrate his attempts. They follow Ikeda's declaration in the first issue of *Bungei bunka*. For example, "Minomono tsuki" [Unstable Moon] (1942) is based on *Kagerō nikki* [A Diary of the Dayfly] written in the tenth century. Similarly, "Inori no nikki" [The Diary of Praying] (1943) is adapted from *Ise monogatari* in the tenth century, and "Yoyo ni nokosan" [For Future Generation] (1943) acquires its world from *Heike monogatari* [Heike Story] in the thirteenth century. Mishima used the framework of classics to deal with some modern issues in his works with the intention of reviving the world of Japanese classics. Before his works were carried by *Bungei bunka*, Mishima wrote some short stories such as "Sukanpo" [The Garden Sorrel] (1938) and "Yakata" [The Mansion] (1939). Although they have some words and phrases from Japanese classics, they are set in modern times and are categorised as modern short stories. Therefore, I think that the changing of his attitude towards the classics can be regarded as being influenced by *Bungei bunka*.

Amongst the contributors of that magazine, I believe that Itō Shizuo (1906-53) is the person who left the greatest impression on Mishima. Mishima regarded him as a great poet. He called him "the most important romanticist whom I have respected since my childhood"[15] and praised his works. Before this reference, Itō appreciated Mishima's works in that magazine and supported Mishima in publishing those works as a book. Thus, it is certain that Mishima's reference included his gratitude to Itō. However, it is also certain that Mishima sympathised with him. For example, Mishima wrote a critical essay showing admiration for Itō's poems,[16] and when Itō died, Mishima wrote three critical essays in appreciation of his achievements.[17] His respect was not just gratitude or temporary.

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[14] Ikeda Tsutomu, "Sōkan no ji" [The Words for Foundation], *Bungei bunka*, July 1938 (Tokyo: Nihon bungaku no kai, 1938), pp. 2-3.
[15] Mishima, "Batsu ni kaete", *Works* 25, p. 56.
[16] Mishima Yukio, "Koza no gyokuseki" [A Jewel on the Old Seat], *Works* 25, p. 45.
[17] Mishima Yukio, "Itō Shizuo", *Works* 26, p. 228; Mishima Yukio, "Itō Shizuo shi wo itamu" [Mourn for Mr. Itō Shizuo], *Works* 26, p. 239; and Mishima Yukio, "Itō Shizuo no koto" [Memory of Itō Shizuo],

In addition, Mishima wrote a poem in Itō's style. The title of that poem is "Ōmikotonori" [Words from the Emperor].[18] It is written in a long waka form which was used by many poets in *Man'yōshū*. As was said above, *Man'yōshū* in the eighth century was one of the most popular collections of poems, and the members of the Japanese Romantic movement praised it. The theme of the poem is the worshipping of the Japanese Emperor and recognising World War II as a war between Japan, a divine land, and brutal countries.

> On the day when our Emperor pronounces his holy words,
> Every bird stops crying, every grass stops weaving,
> Heaven and earth cannot stop dropping tears,
> Silence, there is no sound or voice.
> […]
> From the sea which is polluted by mean enemies,
> The gods of the sea rise with anger,
> The sailors of the enemy are attacked,
> And sink into the deep.[19]

This quotation demonstrates his way of thinking as a Japanese person during wartime and the influence of the times on him. In this poem, the poet looks up at the Emperor and weeps in awe and reverence. This plot resembles Itō's poem in which the poet turns his face upward to the Imperial Palace and weeps. Moreover, the title of Itō's poem, which was issued three months earlier than Mishima's, is also "Ōmikotonori" [Words from the Emperor].[20]

We can argue that Mishima was influenced by Itō whom he called a very important romanticist. Itō wrote many poems which dealt with World War II and admired the Japanese Emperor in his poems. Mishima adored Itō. However, it is impossible to deduce from this fact alone that Mishima was a romantic poet and a radical patriot. We have to think of the social conditions in Japan. When Mishima wrote that poem, Japan was fighting the United States in World War II. All schools in Japan taught imperial history, and students learned that Japan was the country of the

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Works 26, p. 242.
[18] Mishima, "Ōmikotonori", *Works* 35, p. 457. The outline of this poem is this: when the whole country is filled with the tune of the words from the Emperor, the enemies are mowed down. I cannot do anything but dropping tears of joy.
[19] *loc. cit.*
[20] Itō Shizuo, "Ōmikotonori" [Words from the Emperor], *Kogito,* Vol. 114, January 1942 (Tokyo: Kogito Hakkōjo, 1942), p. 16.

gods. Moreover, Japanese people received little information about the war through the mass media, which were controlled by the army. We cannot expect a seventeen-year-old boy to have critical eyes. The anti-American and anti-British tendency became greater and greater in Japanese society, so more or less all Japanese people were patriotic. Mishima was not an extraordinary patriot, but it is true that he looked upon America and Britain as enemies at that time. (After World War II, he perhaps understood that he was controlled by society and realised the importance of having an objective viewpoint about society. This probably had something in common with Wilde who made accusations against hypocrisy in English society in the nineteenth century.) In addition, that social situation led him to deepen his understanding of the Japanese tradition. Then, I think that coming and going between the real world and that of Japanese classics, he became to see the Japanese Emperor as a special existence. The connection between the mature Mishima and the Japanese Emperor should be analysed, but what we should do at this stage is to analyse what kind of romanticism Mishima acquired as a young man through Japanese Romanticism.

Generally speaking, it is quite difficult to define the concept of romanticism. Considering its wide variation, it is impossible to define its concept precisely.[21] However, Mishima's romanticism can be thought of as the tendency towards imaginative longing for something outside worldly reality. It is easy to find it in his first work in book form, "Hanazakari no mori" (1944).[22] In this work, a hero thinks about his ancestors beyond the passage of time, and one of them had an inexpressible longing for the sea. Another had a memory in which she met a wonderful woman whom she guessed was St. Mary. (Mishima was not a Christian, but it is important that he dealt with special existence beyond this real world in his work.)

Moreover, in other short stories, something coming from outside worldly

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[21] Matsuura Takeo tried to do it, and he defined romanticism as "Respecting imagination, deeply sinking in the self-consciousness and ironical rising above one self, love for nature, releasing one's sense, respecting genius as the ultimate style of creation and appreciating customs." However, even by these many words of his, it is difficult to express all areas of romanticism. Of course, in this section, it is impossible to define romanticism precisely. Matsuura Takeo, "Kyōki no hōseki" [The Jewel of Madness], Shirakawa Masayoshi (ed.), *Hihyō to kenkyū Mishima Yukio* [Criticisms and Studies, Mishima Yukio] (Tokyo: Haga Shoten, 1974), p. 395.

[22] In this short story, standing on the hill where he can see the sea, the hero feels nostalgia. He also perceives the river of longing, which comes from his ancestors, then thinks about them beyond the passage of time.

reality appeared as death. In "Misaki nite no monogatari" [A Story at the Cape] (1946),[23] which had been written during World War II, a boy watches a young couple commit suicide by diving from a cliff into the sea. He sees at that moment a shining flash and describes it in the story as "the only truth which they considered to have greater value than their lives".[24] Perhaps Mishima's romanticism, the tendency towards imaginative longing for something outside worldly reality, was related to the special circumstances during World War II. Although it is uncertain whether Mishima saw death as something to be feared or looked forward to at this stage, its imminence seems to have severed his ties to reality.

Immediately after World War II, his ideas of romanticism and death were closely linked to each other. Recalling this period, Mishima wrote as follows, "I think that for the sake of Mr. Yasuda, I can feel death closely even in this peaceful world."[25] We may say that "Ottō to Maya" [Ottō and Maya] (This title is the names of the characters in the short story.) (1942) and "Chūsei" [The Medieval Ages] (1945) by Mishima have strong elements of romanticism. In the former work, the hero dreams of eternal life with the heroine after her death. The latter is a story about the elixir of life. These short stories are set in the Japanese classical world, and their main themes are longing for the dead. This may be related to his applying to join the military, but being turned down as a soldier because of his poor health. Although death in action is terrible and tragic at any time, it is true that there was a climate of opinion prevalent in Japan at that time which regarded it as a glorious death. In addition, his friends were forced to go to the front as soldiers, and he remained behind the lines. Therefore, I think that he felt regret, and yearned for death himself.

These examples reinforce my definition of Mishima's romanticism as a tendency towards imaginative longing for something outside worldly reality. In fact, although he described the facts in front of him in his works, he was more interested in something beyond this world. As stated, in his early works, he described death as a mysterious, glorious moment and demonstrated love between the characters which

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[23] Mishima Yukio, "Misaki nite no monogatari" [A Story at the Cape], *Works* 1, p. 588. The outline of this short story is this: the hero comes to a summer resort with his family. One day he meets a beautiful young couple. They play hide-and-seek, but the couple dive into the sea suddenly. Weeping the hero goes home, but he feels indescribable satisfaction.

[24] *loc. cit.*

[25] Mishima, "Yoka zen'yō", *Works* 29, p. 353.

continues beyond their death. Through the special circumstances of his upbringing, he had a deep understanding of Japanese classics and had developed his imagination. Meeting Yasuda, he found the world of Japanese classics a familiar place to him. Then he became familiar with *Bungei bunka* and followed its tenet, letting classics speak to the people. It can be said that it meant integrating the past world and the real world in his imagination. As his first work in book form shows, the description of the protagonist, who thinks about his ancestors beyond the passage of time, can be considered an example of this. This attitude merged with his sympathy for Itō's poems. Following Itō's idea and the mood of Japanese society during World War II, he looked up to the Japanese Emperor who was remote from ordinary people. The description of a wonderful, unearthly woman in his first work also reflected the image of the Emperor in his poem. As these points demonstrate, a longing for something outside worldly reality was formed within him. In his works, on one occasion, this emerges as death, on other occasions it appears as the nostalgic past or as an unearthly existence. Mishima's romanticism is this tendency towards imaginative longing for something outside worldly reality, which had developed within him in the context of Japanese Romanticism.

1.2. The End of World War II and Mishima's Interest in Transcendence

As was said in the previous section, Mishima dealt with some modern issues as the themes of his works with the intention of reviving the world of Japanese classics.[26] This is shown in his following the motto of *Bungei bunka* which is to let classics speak to people.

It is easy to find another tendency in addition to Mishima's romanticism in his works before and during World War II. Mishima called this tendency "the tradition of French psychological novels which has continued since the seventeenth century".[27] This tendency can be regarded as criticising worldly reality from the cynical viewpoint, which Noguchi Takehiko defines as "the highbrow habit by psychological analysis"[28] and frequently appears as aphorisms in Mishima's works. Two examples below are found in his two early works:

> It is a human being's privilege to try to prevent sadness through comedy.[29]

> These two people are a well-balanced scale. When one side rises, another side goes down, and its motion is so fluent.[30]

Apart from these two works, in some others written at this time, can be found many aphorisms. Mishima says that he had learned the way to analyse reality like these examples through the tradition of psychological works such as *Le Bal du comte d'Orgel* (1924) by Raymond Radiguet, *La Princesse de Clèves* (1687) by Madame de La Fayette, *Adolphe* (1816) by Constant and *Phèdre* (1677) by Jean Racine.[31] As mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, Mishima was especially

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[26] Sometimes, this idea is called Shin-Kotenshugi [Neo-Classicism]. However, this term is not generally used for this movement in the literary history of modern Japanese literature, and may invite confusion with Mishima's usage of Kotenshugi [Classicism]. Thus, I refrain from using it here.
[27] Mishima, "Issatsu no hon: Radige *Dorujeru haku no butōkai* ", *Works* 31, p. 167.
[28] Noguchi Takehiko, *Mishima Yukio no sekai* [The World of Mishima Yukio] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1968), p. 62.
[29] Mishima, "Damie garasu", *Works* 1, p. 105.
[30] Mishima, "Tamaki haru", *Works* 1, p. 231.
[31] Mishima, "Issatsu no hon: Radige *Dorijeru haku no butōkai* ", *Works* 31, p. 167.

interested in Radiguet. In *Le Bal du comte d'Orgel*, the narrator thoroughly analyses the other characters' motivations and the meaning of events, and this analysis brings out developments in the plot. Mishima tried to use this method in his works. However, the impressions created by Mishima's works and that of French writers were unlikely to have been wholly consistent. One of the causes of these differences is probably the nature of Mishima's aphorisms, which may be described as contemptuous. Reading criticism of the relationships between adult men and women by an impudent boy, perhaps the reader does not think Mishima had a keen insight into human nature. If anything, these aphorisms give the unfavourable impression that Mishima tinkered with human mentality. The use of these cynical aphorisms seems to be closely connected with trying to put him in a solipsistic and all-seeing position like the hero of *Le Bal du comte d'Orgel*. As a result, his works show that Mishima had a strong wish to dominate the world in his works.

The terror of death during air attacks, which was widespread in Japan in wartime, sustained Mishima's romanticism and had formed his interest in transcendence, waiting for something outside worldly reality. Therefore, I think that he unconsciously analysed facts in this world from a distant viewpoint and sometimes had felt superior to other people and the events taking place there. Then how did the end of World War II influence this tendency of Mishima's? As John W. Dower states,[32] it is true that exhaustion and despair (*kyodatsu*) were widespread in Japan immediately after the war. On 15 August 1945, the Japanese Emperor directly announced the end of World War II and defeat of Japan to the people through a radio broadcast. In the wartime, people had received information only through the media, which was controlled by the military authorities, and believed Japan was on course for victory. Thus, we can think that the Emperor's announcement, which was the first instance of the Emperor speaking to the people in Japanese history, caused a terrible shock. The pictures in which people dissolved into tears when they listened to the announcement clearly demonstrate it to us. In addition, perhaps people were also exhausted from the long wartime. Dower states, "[from the conquest of Manchuria in 1931,] the Japanese had been geared for the war for fifteen years; and as their situation became

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[32] John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton &Company, 1999).

increasingly desperate."[33] Therefore, it can be said that exhaustion and despair were social phenomena at that time. However, it is also true that death in war was not such an immediate threat. For example, during the war, lights in the public facilities and in the private houses were strictly controlled to avoid air attacks. However, it ended with the end of the war. With bright lights, perhaps people actually understood that the war had ended. Moreover, people who had been caught up in evacuee life, returned to their houses in the urban areas. Military drills in schools or local groups were finished. Demobilised soldiers returned to their hometowns. Although the shock of defeat in World War II had not yet disappeared completely from Japan, people eagerly started reconstructing their lives. They made maximum efforts to acquire the goods necessary for their daily life in order to survive those hard days. Mishima had to live in a worldly reality which he despised. Having an interest in transcendence, waiting for something outside worldly reality and despising reality in this world, he had to live in this world. It is probable that this would lead to a kind of sense of isolation inside Mishima in the reconstruction after World War II. When Mishima is compared with the writers of proletarian literature who considered the end of World War II a release, Mishima's situation becomes clearer. Oketani Hideaki declares that "Mishima Yukio was a heretic of Japanese post-war literature."[34] (However, on the contrary Tsuge Teruhiko stated that Mishima represented the Japanese people and that other writers were the heretics.[35] Either way, Mishima was outside the main current of Japanese literature at that time.)

In those works published immediately after World War II, "Tabako" [A Cigarette] (1946), "Karu no miko to Sotōri hime" [Prince Karu and Princess Sotōri] (1947) and "Yoru no shitaku" [Preparation for Night] (1947), it is easy to find this discrepancy:

> Now, I may start hoping very much to be someone apart from myself.[36]

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[33] *ibid.*, p. 87.
[34] Oketani Hideaki, "Mishima Yukio to sengo bungaku" [Mishima Yukio and the Post-war Literature], *Kokubungaku kaishaku to kanshō*, January 1970 (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1970), p. 73.
[35] Tsuge Teruhiko, "Sengo bungaku no itan to seikei" [Heresy and the Legitimate in the Post-war Literature], *Kokubungaku*, April 1980 (Tokyo: Gakutōsha, 1980), pp. 55-60.
[36] Mishima, "Tabako", *Works* 1, pp. 516-7.

One can see here an indication of his romanticism. In brief, Mishima perhaps found the gap between himself and the post-war period and tried to live after the war with the attitude of wartime. About ten years later, recollecting these days, Mishima says:

> Essentially, I could not think that I was a rebellious man or treacherous man. To justify myself, I defined myself as a Classicist.[37]

> Although I was young, I hated new things. I hated things which broke harmony.[38]

He called his anachronistic style Classicism. In the atmosphere of reconstruction, it was natural that Mishima's works were considered by people as irrelevant, and Mishima was given "minus 150 points"[39] by Nakamura Mitsuo (1911-88), an adviser to a major publisher at that time. He judged that Mishima's direction was backward looking, and that his attitude towards society in the post-war period was too negative.

In his other works after World War II, there were many sentences which analysed worldly reality with contempt. They are driven by his romanticism. This is a statement from his first novel, *Tōzoku* (1948):[40]

> Akihide is not innocent enough to misunderstand this expression in a woman's eyes. Although Akihide showed his innocence in bed with Yoshiko who brought him the catastrophe, Akihide learned the joy and novelty of dissipation unaccompanied by the feeling of frivolous play which was brought out by an understanding of death. When he stayed with Yoshiko, expectation of an accidental death was a hard and permanent activity. Recently, this expectation has been changing for the symbol of a light-hearted call to life or flippant company with living. [41]

Although, at a glance, it seems to trace the mental state of the hero who made up his mind to kill himself, the important points in this quotation are " a light-hearted call to

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[37] Mishima, "Kūhaku no yakuwari - Seishun no yakuwari", *Woks* 27, p. 9.
[38] *ibid.*, p. 11.
[39] Nakamura Mitsuo and Usui Yoshimi, "Mishima Yukio taidan" [A Talk about Mishima Yukio], *Bungakukai*, November 1952 (Tokyo: Bungeishunjūsha, 1952), pp. 160-1.
[40] The outline of this novel is this: Akihide is Viscount Fujimura's son, and he falls in love with a woman, Yoshiko. However, he is made fun of by Yoshiko who is fickle, and left. He makes up his mind to kill himself. Similarly, Kiyoko who is Baron Yamauchi's daughter, is left by a heartless young man, Saeki. Kiyoko also intends to kill herself. Akihide and Kiyoko marry and kill themselves on the bridal night.
[41] Mishima, "Tōzoku", *Works* 2, pp. 81-2.

life" and "flippant company with living". Reading this quotation, the reader probably finds contempt for worldly reality rather than despair of it. At this stage of Mishima's development, this is quite an important point. I believe that this kind of cynical analysis of worldly reality was sustained by his romanticism. Even after World War II, his romanticism was reinforced by the attitude he had developed during the war. I think that this is what he defines as "classicism". Therefore, Noguchi Takehiko called him "a romanticist wearing the mask of classicism."[42] Moreover, Sakita Susumu directly described him as a "romanticist".[43]

Mishima says that when he wrote his novel, *Tōzoku*, after World War II, he intended to imitate the mood of *Le Bal du comte d'Orgel* and to be a rival to Radiguet by using Radiguet's style.[44] We can argue that this reflection in his critical essay demonstrates the strength of his romanticism, which included criticising worldly reality from the cynical viewpoint. World War II was over; the terror of death in war had disappeared from people's daily life. However, the situation had not been the same in Mishima's mind. At the end of *Tōzoku*, finding the double suicide of a hero and heroine, other characters understand that something very important was already stolen from their lives. I believe that what this story symbolises is the superiority of death over daily life. Perhaps this viewpoint creates in this novel an atmosphere which leads to the world being despised. Before and during World War II, Mishima had the tendency to long for something outside worldly reality as his romanticism. After the end of World War II, he had maintained this tendency, so his analysis of people's psychology using the methods of the French psychological novels had an arrogant or artificial mood. It was away from the real world. Combined with his romanticism, it produced a sense of transcendence in his mind. Somewhere in Mishima's mind, the view that the post-war world should be despised, had remained.

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[42] Noguchi, *Mishima Yukio no sekai*, p. 76.
[43] Sakita Susumu, "Mishima Yukio to koten shugi" [Mishima Yukio and Classicism], *Gakuyō*, November 1982 (Kanazawa: Kanazawa Joshi Tanki Daigaku, 1982), p. 7.
[44] Mishima Yukio, "Atogaki" [Postscript], *Works* 26, p. 249. He also said that he failed to accomplish this intention perfectly because of his inadequate understanding of the French psychological novel represented by Radiguet.

1.3. The Stance Assumed by Mishima and Wilde: *Salomé* (1893)

When Mishima first became familiar with Wilde's *Salomé* in 1937, he was twelve years old.[45] Mishima says that after his first contact with that work, he had loved reading *Salomé*.[46] As stated in the introduction, he also called the opera, *Salomé*, "the opera which I love".[47] In addition, he directed Wilde's *Salomé* in Tokyo in 1960.[48] The list of the books which Mishima possessed demonstrates that he had at least four translations of that work of Wilde's. In addition, Mishima says, "this is the first literary work which I chose by myself for me".[49] Why did this play of Wilde's fascinate him? Horie Tamaki is one of the few scholars who deal directly with this issue. Analysing a parallel between Jokanaan's head and Mishima's death (He killed himself by *harakiri*, and his head was cut off by his assistant), she mentions that Mishima was fascinated by harmony between the Christian atmosphere and Japonism of the illustrations.[50] For example, when Mishima directed this play, he used Beardsley's illustrations in black and white which were influenced by Japanese landscape paintings. In this section, I interpret *Salomé* from a new angle, and then the reason for Mishima's love of the play will be investigated.

In his poems, Wilde often uses scenes of sunrise and sunset, so the moon plays a significant role related to the basic atmosphere of those poems. For instance, in his early poem, *Ravenna* (1878), all that happens in the world ends under the moonbeam. In *Endymion* (1878) the moon leads to the next aspects in the poem. In addition, in *San Miniato* (1876), the moon symbolises St. Mary's throne. In this context, as Rodney Shewan says, "Wilde's long fascination with the moon reached its climacteric in *Salomé*,"[51] the moon also has an important meaning in this play. Imura

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[45] Mishima, "Radige ni tsukarete", *Works* 27, p. 210. He notes that he bought it at the bookshop.
[46] Mishima Yukio, "*Kinjiki* wa nijūdai no sōkessan" [*Forbidden Colours* is a Settlement in my Twenties], *Works* 25, p. 492.
[47] Mishima, "Aporo no sakazuki", *Works* 26, p. 30. The music of the opera, *Salomé*, was composed by Richard Strauss.
[48] Kishida Kyōko, *Salomé*, dir. Mishima, Bungakuza [the Literary Theatre], Tōyoko Hall, Tokyo, 5-16 April 1960.
[49] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 335.
[50] Horie, *Bara no sadizumu*, p. 195.
[51] Shewan, *Oscar Wilde, Art and Egotism*, p. 138.

Kimie also mentions the importance of the moon.[52] Concerned with the fact that the moon changes its colour in the process of the play, Imura says that the moon in this play is sensitive to the change of the mood in each scene.[53] Based on these previous studies, I will now develop the analysis of the role of the moon.

Firstly, as Imura says,[54] the moon has the meaning of a mirror which reflects each character's true inner feelings. For the Page of Herodias, the moon is "une femme qui sort d'un tombeau. Elle resemble à une femme morte. On dirait qu'elle cherche des morts."[55] It describes how he has been anxious about the sinister symptoms since the beginning of the play. The moonlight makes Salomé quite pale, and the Young Syrian is fascinated by her. The heroine says of the moon, "Elle ne s'est jamais donnée aux hommes, comme les autres Déesses."[56] It is clear that the moon reveals Salomé's own pride in herself. Regarding Jokanaan, the moon becomes like blood, and expresses his faith for the prediction. By what Herod says, "On dirait une femme hystérique, une femme hystérique qui va cherchant des amants partout. Elle est nue aussi. Elle est toute nue,"[57] he exposes his true feelings of lust. At Herod's asking, Herodias answers, "Non. La lune ressemble à la lune, c'est tout."[58] From this answer, the audience and the reader of the play may recognise her realistic and materialistic character. As was pointed out, in various scenes of this play, the moon reflects the protagonists' true character like a mirror. I believe this fact demonstrates that, on seeing their own hearts on the surface of the moon, each protagonist tells the audience and the reader their true inner feelings. In brief, the moon gives the protagonists the opportunity to make their characters clear.

Then its role as a mirror hints at other characteristics of the moon in this play. When Salomé appears in the play, she appreciates the moon:

> Que c'est bon de voir la lune! Elle ressemble à une petite pièce de monnaie. On dirait une toute petite fleur d'argent.[59]

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[52] Imura, *Sarome no hen'yō*. esp. pp. 44-60.
[53] Imura, "Sarome tsuki no shinwa", *Yuriika* [Eureka] September 1980, p. 110.
[54] *loc. cit.*
[55] Wilde, "Salomé", *Salomé. A Florentine Tragedy. and Vera, FCE*, p. 5.
[56] *ibid.*, p. 16.
[57] *ibid.*, p. 35.
[58] *loc. cit.*
[59] *ibid.*, p. 15.

This phrase is related to the lines which the Young Syrian speaks to praise Salomé:

> Elle est comme une narcisse agité du vent…Elle ressemble à une fleur d'argent.[60]

Salomé regards the moon as a virgin which stands for her own proud youth and beauty. Similarly, the Young Syrian perceives that the moon symbolises the princess who is beautiful and whom he cannot reach. In addition, the moon has another meaning for Salomé:

> il ressemble à une mince image d'ivoire. On dirait une image d'argent. Je suis sûre qu'il est chaste, autant que la lune. Il ressemble à un rayon d'argent.[61]

These are the words which Salomé speaks of Jokanaan. This time, the moon is used to describe his purity and nobility. In other words, the moon changes its shape freely in response to the characters in the play. It is probable that it does not only reflect their true inner feelings, which the moon observes, but also transforms its shape into any character. It is clear that the moon has a different nature from other characters in this play. It can reflect one's true inner feelings to clarify one's personality. Its existence, which can give the protagonists the chance to show their true nature, is the very crux of this play.

> However true this is, the more essential point about Wilde's heretical dramaturgy is that it is not only based on a paradoxical ethic of good and evil, but on one ultimately expressive of the man himself.[62]

This reference of Joseph Donohoe's to *Salomé* reinforces my interpretation above.

There are many scenes in the play in which the audience and the reader can realise the strong power of the author to create and to organise the world. For example, following Ezekiel,[63] the voice of Jokanaan says:

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[60] *ibid.*, p. 14.
[61] *ibid.*, p. 25.
[62] Joseph Donohoe, "Distance, death and desire in Salomé", Raby (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Oscar Wilde*, p. 137.
[63] Ezekiel (32:7-8).

> En ce jour-là le soleil deviendra noir comme un sac de poil, et la lune deviendra comme du sang, et les étoiles du ciel tomberont sur la terre comme les figues vertes tombent d'un figuier, et les rois de la terre auront peur.[64]

This voice predicts the coming of the final judgement. As was said, the moon mentions his nature as a predictor of God. However, the final judgement in this play comes after Salomé's dance of the seven veils. It is long after Jokanaan's prediction. On the other hand, in the scene immediately preceding the dance of the seven veils, the moon predicts the final judgement by changing its colour. Moreover, its red colour signals that the prediction is fulfilled in Jokanaan's blood and Salomé's kiss to his bloody head. Although Jokanaan suspects that he may be martyred, he does not know that his blood will have something to do with the final scene of the play. I think these things prove that the power of the moon is stronger than Jokanaan's.

In the lines of the Page of Herodias, there are some clear descriptions of the strong power of the moon. The Page loves the Young Syrian. However, the Young Syrian longs for Salomé and dies for his love. Then the Page mourns in grief:

> Je savais bien que la lune cherchait un mort, mais je ne savais pas que c'était lui qu'elle cherchait. Ah! pourquoi ne l'ai-je pas caché de la lune? Si je l'avais caché dans une caverne elle ne l'aurait pas vu.[65]

By these lines, the audience and the reader find the strong power of the moon and understand that the moon is the centre of the play. Moreover, as will be stated later, the moon's killing of the Young Syrian is related to the climax of the play. We assume this during the dance in which Salomé gradually takes off her seven veils. In the former part of the play, she appreciates the moon as a little piece of silver and convinces herself that it is a virgin. In that part, she is a virgin who is proud of her youth. However, taking off her veils, she grows up into a more voluptuous woman. In Mark's Gospel, she requires John's head at her mother, Herodias' suggestion. However, in Wilde's play, she requires it by herself, she lets the reader and the audience note even her devilishness. The author made her change much more than in Mark's Gospel. We can argue that the dance of the seven veils is symbolic of this major change. Step by

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[64] Wilde, "Salomé", *Salomé. A Florentine Tragedy. and Vera*, *FCE*, p. 53.
[65] *ibid.*, pp. 31-2.

step, but surely, she is changing. That situation is like the emergence of the butterfly. This dance is not found in the Gospel; probably influenced by Flaubert's work, "Herodias" (1877),[66] the author created this scene in his work. Katharine Worth says, "[Salomé's] Unveiling was an appropriate image for the activity which Wilde regarded as the artist's primary duty: self-expression and self-revelation."[67] The meaning of this dance can be interpreted from the point of view of the individualism which Wilde refers to in his critical art essays. Similarly, this dance can be the process by which Salomé becomes a devilish woman. This element is originally provided by the author. All these processes take place under the moon. We may say it symbolises the power of the author.

Before the process of Salomé's change, there is a small but important event. Herod finds the Young Syrian's blood on the floor and orders it to be cleaned up. However, it is left and Salomé dances on it. Now, Salomé dances on the blood and changes as a result. It is clear what these facts mean. Salomé's change is of supreme importance, and her decision to require Jokanaan's head is beyond the other characters' imagination, even beyond that of the audience and the reader. However, all things happen on the Young Syrian's blood. As already mentioned in the Page's lines, the Young Syrian's death is brought about by the moon as the author. In my interpretation, it emphasises that although Salomé's change and her decision are unexpected, all things take place on the author's palm. Salomé's change and decision show how she manipulates and controls not only the characters but also the audience and the reader. Then, by handling Salomé, who has everyone in the palm of her hand, the author is intent on placing all people who are involved in this play in the palm of his hand. I think it is the author's great ambition to take the audience or the reader into his power.

This intention is clarified in the scene set close to the curtain:

> Je ne veux pas regarder les choses. Je ne veux pas que les choses me regardent. Éteignez les flambeaux. Cachez la lune! Cachez les étoiles! Cachons- nous dans

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[66] "Herodias" is in *Trois contes* (first published in 1877). Flaubert describes the dance by Salomé in the bluish veil and a square of dove-grey silk. Gustave Flaubert, *Trois contes: Un cour simple. La Légende de Saint- Julien L'Hospitalier. Herodias.* [Three Tales: A Simple Heart. The Legend of St. Julian. The Hospitaler. Herodias.] (Paris: Bibliothèque-Charpentier, 1910), pp. 238-44.

[67] Katharine Worth, *Oscar Wilde* (London: MacMillan Press, 1983), p. 66.

notre palais, Hérodias. Je commence à avoir peur.
[Les esclaves éteignent les flambeaux. Les étoiles disparaissent. Un grand nuage noir passe à travers la lune et la cache complètement. La scène devient tout à fait sombre. Le tétrarque commence à monter l'escalier.][68]

These are Herod's lines and the stage directions. He orders the slaves to hide the moon. It is certain that even the King cannot move the moon. The heavenly body is out of his control. (This is one piece of supporting evidence that the moon is the author.) The moon as the author controls everything. Therefore, in this scene, I think that the moon is not hidden by the king. It hides behind the great black cloud by itself. Moreover, it does not mean that, after hiding behind the clouds, the moon cannot see the sequence on the stage. It probably means that the world of the play with the characters is enclosed in the limited space in the black cloud by the moon as the author. In addition, the audience and the reader are located in this limited space with the world of the play and the characters, because the moon also hides from their eyes. The King should be the ruler of the world, but he is probably thinking that his place is being taken by the stronger power whose name is the author. I think that he fears the stronger power, so he tries to hide the moon. Manipulating Herod's terror, the author encloses the audience and the reader in the limited space within the great black cloud. Thus, it can be said that Herod's terror of being overpowered and castrated is the audience's and the readers'.

Therefore, it is appropriate that the moon changes Salomé's image. Wilde makes Salomé, who is a girl in the Bible, a devilish woman. Similarly, in the play, the moon makes her a woman who appreciates it more. In Wilde's idea, Salomé is a woman who admires the moon as the author, and the moon stands beside her. In the final scene, the moonbeam demonstrates this relationship:

LA VOIX DE SALOMÉ
Ah! j'ai baisé ta bouche, Iokanaan, j'ai baisé ta bouche. Il y avait une âcre saveur sur tes lèvres. Était-ce la saveur du sang? … Mais, peut-être est-ce la saveur de l'amour. On dit que l'amour a une âcre saveur … Mais, qu'importe? Qu'importe? J'ai baisé ta bouche, Iokanaan, j'ai baisé ta bouche.
[Un rayon de lune tombe sur Salomé et l'éclaire.]

HÉROD *[se retournant et voyant Salomé]*

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[68] Wilde, "Salomé", *Salomé. A Florentine Tragedy. and Vera*, *FCE*, p. 81.

Tuez cette femme!
[Les soldats s'élancent et écrasent sous leurs boucliers Salomé, fille d'Hérodias, Princesse de Judée.]

FIN[69]

Under the moonbeam, Salomé is being controlled by the moon directly and passing out of the King's control. Therefore, Herod, the ruler, orders her killed. The method of killing is a little strange, but I believe that when he kills her, he needs to hide Salomé's body from the moonbeam immediately. He has to sever the connection between Salomé and the moon. One aspect of this play can be regarded as the story of a struggle for domination. However, the result is clear. Herod is just one character in this play; he is conceived by the author. It is impossible for him to defeat the author.

A similar plot is found in Wilde's favourite poem, *Charmides* (1878), which is based on Greek myth. There is a virgin girl like Salomé and a handsome lad, Charmides, who is drowned and does not respond to her wish like Jokanaan. The white girl is also killed, and Venus perceives that Artemis killed her. Artemis is the same as Diana in Roman myths, and both of them are goddesses of the moon. In *Salomé,* the heroine is not given any response by Jokanaan and is killed by the King's order. However, as the plot of *Charmides* shows, it is also possible to interpret that she is killed by the moon which controls the King. At this point, the moon also dominates the King. The situation is the same for the other characters. Moreover, at the great terrace in the Palace of Herod, the various characters speak about their own gods. The author encloses them together with their gods by the black clouds and puts the moon outside alone. The position of the moon is very extraordinary, and the moon is located higher than the gods who are mentioned by the characters on the terrace. It is connected with the lines of *Endymion.* The hero prays to the moon to protect his lover. The moon appears to possess the power of destiny, and that is the author.

No one can defeat the author, including the audience and the reader who are enclosed with the characters in the limited space by the great black cloud. Generally speaking, for authors, the characters in their works have the nature of chess pieces. This is especially true in the genre of the play. This must be one of the reasons why Wilde wrote the plays, and in *Salomé* he had intended to greatly influence the

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[69] *ibid.*, pp. 81-2.

audience and the reader. This is likely to be related to the fact that he made up many impromptu stories to delight people in fashionable society. Perhaps he hoped to be the centre of attraction at all times.

It is well known that while Wilde hesitated to adopt Alfred Douglas' (1870-1945) poor translation of *Salomé* into English, Aubrey Beardsley (1872-98) brought his translation to Wilde. However, Wilde chose Douglas' and helped to amend it in the name of Douglas as a translator.[70] In addition, there is evidence that Wilde did not like Beardsley's illustrations for *Salomé*.[71] I think the different perceptions between Wilde's image for his work, *Salomé*, and Beardsley's illustrations were some of the reasons for Wilde's dislike. For example, based on his interpretation and his perception, Beardsley drew the Page as female. Moreover, he drew other authors' books in his illustrations for *Salomé*. It is possible that this ironical element would increase Wilde's antipathy. As my interpretation of *Salomé* shows, Wilde hoped to dominate people manipulatively, never to be dominated manipulatively by Beardsley. This situation is found in the picture of the moon in Beardsley's illustrations. He drew Wilde's face on the moon. There is not enough proof whether or not Beardsley understood Wilde's view, which involves not only the characters in the play but also the audience and the reader, and the importance of the symbolic meaning of the moon. There is a possibility that Beardsley drew Wilde's face on the moon simply to be spiteful. However, Wilde possibly had thought it to be a serious challenge to his view. He regarded it as Beardsley's attempt to sneer at Wilde's work from above. It means the real power is not Wilde but Beardsley. Wilde had thought that his hidden intention to rule others was understood by Beardsley. We may say that this was the main reason why Wilde did not like Beardsley's illustrations for *Salomé*.[72]

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[70] Alfred Douglas, *The Autobiography of Lord Alfred Douglas* (London: Martin Secker, 1929, rpt. 1931), p. 160.

[71] Hesketh Pearson introduces the fact that Wilde disliked Beardsley's illustrations for *Salomé* and criticised them as "too Japanese". Hesketh Pearson, *The Life of Oscar Wilde* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1946), p. 230. Moreover, Frank Harris says, "Oscar always hated the illustrations [for *Salomé* by Beardsley] and would not have the book in his house." Frank Harris, *Oscar Wilde* (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1959), p. 74. It was first published in 1916. *Oscar Wilde: His Life and Confession* (New York:Frank Harris, 1916).

[72] Stanley Weintraub refers to the events between Wilde and Beardsley in detail. Stanley Weintraub, *Beardsley* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972). esp. pp. 66-86. Eventually, Wilde permitted the publication of *Salomé* with Beardsley's illustrations. Perhaps Wilde was convinced that ordinary people could not understand the conflict between Beardsley and himself just by looking at the illustrations. In addition, he could be too proud to admit that he was unsettled by Beardsley. Therefore, perhaps Wilde chose the powerful impression of Beardsley's illustrations for readers.

As was pointed out in this section, Mishima read *Salomé* with Beardsley's illustrations when he was twelve years old.[73] In his essay, he discusses when he read it first, how Beardsley's illustrations played an important role for him.[74] Then when he directed this play in Tokyo in 1960, he also exaggerated the importance of the effect produced by Beardsley.[75] It must have been difficult for a twelve-year-old boy (or even for anyone else) to understand Wilde's view completely. He was only fascinated by the atmosphere of the world created by Wilde. However, it was connected to Wilde's view about influence. As was said in the former part of this chapter, Mishima's romanticism led him to a place where he watched the world of reality from above. In other words, he strongly hoped to be in a special position where he could see everything. We can argue that it is quite similar to Wilde's view. No matter that Mishima could not understand Wilde's view accurately, he possibly found something with which he sympathised. It is also possible to consider that Mishima intuitively realised Wilde's view about dominance in *Salomé* without unnecessary knowledge. For his understanding of Wilde's view, Beardsley's illustrations played a significant role for him. Through his illustrations, the young Mishima could find the voluptuous atmosphere of Wilde's *Salomé* and also be provided with a hint for understanding of Wilde's view. For example, in his critical essay about the reason why he loved to read Wilde's *Salomé*, he says, "It seems that some anxiety was growing deep down within myself and that I looked for something to connect with this anxiety."[76] With the sign of the end of the war, he found that his romanticism, which was longing for something outside worldly reality with a sense of death, was in a fateful crisis. He must also have been afraid that it was denied by the worldly reality in the post-war period. I think that this is the anxiety which is referred to in the quotation. Consequently, he strongly needed *Salomé* as a play which demonstrated him a superior position not to be taunted by worldly reality but to control it totally. This view, more than anything else, was the theme in which Mishima was involved when he wrote his works. Therefore, he was fascinated by Wilde's *Salomé*. This was the first point of contact between Mishima and Wilde. Although it was quite difficult for twelve-year-old Mishima to understand

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[73] Mishima, "Radige ni tsukarete", *Works* 27, p. 210.
[74] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 335.
[75] Mishima Yukio, "Sarome no enshutsu ni tsuite" [On Direction of Salomé], *Works* 29, p. 488.
[76] Mishima, "Wa ga miseraretaru mono", *Works* 27, p. 227.

Wilde's view in this play, it is possible that with unalloyed eyes the boy responded to Wilde's attempt to dominate other people.

When Mishima directed *Salomé* in Tokyo in 1960, in the programme notes, he said that he tried to show a new *Salomé* rather than Wilde's version. Since he first read it, his perception of *Salomé* as a play was concerned with the theme of dominance had remained with Mishima. Twenty-three years later, directing this play, I think Mishima tried to dominate Wilde.

Part I: Conclusion

Loving Japanese classical literature from his childhood, Mishima had been building up a romantic foundation for transcendence. Then, becoming acquainted with French psychological novels, for instance Radiguet's works, and combining them with his own romanticism, he found cynical methods of analysing the human nature. This is related to his taste for *Salomé.* This play demonstrated him a superior position to see worldly reality from above. However, after World War II, the passage of time forced him to live in the post-war period without the terror of death in war, and he began to try to take part in worldly reality. In *Confessions of a Mask* (1949), Mishima dealt with this issue using a metaphor, homosexuality. A homosexual hero tries to love a woman, this reflects the gap between Mishima and worldly reality in the post-war period.

This was Mishima's position before going to Greece in 1952 as a Journalist for *the Asahi Shinbun* [The Asahi Newspaper]. I discussed Mishima's statement that he has no wish to concern himself with any writers and their works without physical yearning in the introduction to this part. For Mishima, it was important to take part in worldly reality, and this was linked to contact with this world through the body. When he visited Greece, I think he had further developed his philosophy through increased awareness of his own body. As was said, young Mishima was attracted by Wilde and identified himself with Wilde on the point of domination. After visiting Greece, how he developed his thinking about Wilde and how their connection changed will be researched in the later part of this thesis.

Part II: Pluralism and Dualism

"Wilde was not a good tragic actor, I often think that. [...] Amongst all sort of immeasurable pain, he did not know simple restraint."[1] Mishima criticises Wilde as above in his treatise. He also says that Wilde's lifestyle was somewhat Bohemian; and did not experience the pain of having to show patience.[2] It is possible that Mishima would make an accusation against Wilde of leading a life of self-indulgence. However, is that all? In particular, was Wilde's lifestyle merely shameless and corrupt, and was Mishima's blameless and moral? It is certain that Mishima's criticism indicates great differences between them, but what difference should we note? I believe that the answer is related to differences between their fundamental attitudes towards worldly reality and their lives. In this part, I will investigate how the basic attitude of Wilde came about, and why Mishima, whose own attitudes were developing, did not agree with it.

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[1] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 341.
[2] *loc. cit.*

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Chapter 2. Oscar Wilde's Refutal of Dichotomies: From an Irish Background

To analyse Wilde's philosophical development, it is important to research his Irish background. However, it is not easy to find studies which discuss his Irish background as their main topics. Although there are many biographies, most of them attach importance to the latter half of his life. For example, John Stokes mainly discusses Wilde's life after graduation from Oxford,[3] and in Rupert Hart-Davis' book,[4] there are few letters which refer to Wilde's Irish background. *Wilde the Irishman* edited by Jerusha MacCormack (1998) and *Oscar Wilde: The Importance of Being Irish* by Davis Coakley (1994)[5] are exceptional in that they deal with this issue as their main topic. Generally speaking, it is believed that Wilde was not interested in Ireland and its social problems. The reason why many people think so is clear. In comparison with the quantity of his works, letters and records of his conversation, the number of his references to Irish affairs is limited. Moreover, after moving to England, he did not return to Ireland. Therefore, most scholars seem to judge that Wilde ignored the country of his birth.

However, in his later years, Wilde supported Charles Stewart Parnell, who was a leader of the movement for Irish self-government, and Michael Davitt who fought for tenants' rights and was imprisoned. We can see that this attitude of Wilde's towards Irish social problems is the basis of his essay, "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" (1891). Consequently, he did not neglect the country of his birth. The important point for investigation is why he kept his concern and views for Ireland deep down within himself and why he revealed them in the 1890s when that essay was written. These points seem to have great significance and play a part in forming the basis of Wilde's philosophy.

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[3] John Stokes, *Oscar Wilde* (in the British Council's Writers and their Works Series) (London: Longman, 1978).
[4] *Letters*.
[5] Jerusha MacCormack (ed.), *Wilde the Irishman* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); and Davis Coakley, *Oscar Wilde: The Importance of Being Irish* (Dublin: Town House, 1994).

2.1. Tensions Created in Wilde by his Irish Background

As was said in the previous page, personal references to Wilde's Irish background do not provide an adequate basis for research. Therefore, in this section, this issue will be dealt with from the perspective of the relationship between Wilde and his parents. To examine how his Irish background influenced his philosophical development, it will be helpful to study his mother. The relationship with his father will be analysed in the next section.

His mother Jane Francesca Elgee was probably born in 1824.[6] Her father, Charles Elgee, was a lawyer and her grandfather, John Elgee, was a clergyman of the Church of Ireland. As will be stated below, she was stimulated by the nationalistic movement in her youth. In 1851, she married Willam Robert Wilde (1815-76) and had three children: William (1852-99), Oscar and Isola. (This daughter died young.[7]) After Oscar Wilde's birth, they moved from 21 Westland Row, Dublin, to 1 Merrion Square, Dublin. It is said that she had parties every weekend there. When her husband died, she moved to London in 1879. Her life there was not luxurious, but many people visited her. However, after Oscar's imprisonment, she became weak and spent most of the day in bed. She could not see her son in prison and died on 3 February 1896.

Her influence on Oscar Wilde can roughly be categorised into two areas. One is on the cultural side. Her great-grandfather, Thomas Kingsbury, a physician, was a friend of Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), the author of *Gulliver's Travels*. In addition, her uncle, Charles Robert Maturin (1782-1824), wrote a Gothic novel, *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820). This novel was admired by many writers, such as Walter Scott (1771-1832) and Pierre Charles Baudelaire (1821-67) as they also appreciated *Frankenstein; Or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818) by Mary Shelley (1797-1851).

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[6] The year of her birth is unclear. Some books say 1826 and others say 1821. She sometimes told childish lies about her age to tease others. This mischief of hers perhaps caused this confusion. This type of behaviour was inherited by her son, Oscar Wilde.

[7] Isola Francesca Emily Wilde. Details of her life are unclear, including the date of her death. For example, even in *The Life of Oscar Wilde* by Robert Sherard (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1911) [Third ed.], which is one of the most reliable books about Oscar Wilde's life, there is no precise record of when she was born. In addition, as to her age at her death, Hesketh Pearson says nine years old in his book, *The Life of Oscar Wilde*, p. 16 (London: Methuen, 1954), but Vyvyan Holland says ten in his book, *Son of Oscar Wilde* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1954, rpt. Robinson, 1999), p. 274. It now seems clear that she was born on 2 April 1857 and died on 23 February 1867, according to the information in Merlin Holland's book, *The Wilde Album* (London: Fourth Estate Limited, 1997), p. 18.

Moreover, Jane was a gifted linguist. She mastered languages such as German, French, Latin and Greek, when she was a teenager. This talent was inherited by her son, Oscar Wilde, whose results in Greek examinations were always excellent. Her translation of some German and French novels were published,[8] and her essays and poems were also published.[9] After her husband, William Wilde's death, she edited Irish folktales which her husband had collected and published them as a book in London.[10] For these books and essays, she began to use her pen-name, Speranza. It is clear that Oscar Wilde inherited her talent for writing. In addition, it is probable that he was influenced by his great-uncle, Maturin. In his masterpiece, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, Melmoth, the hero, buys 150 years life without ageing. It is easy to find a similar theme in Wilde's novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Davis Coakley points out other similarities between these works.[11] It is also said that Speranza's house was a centre of literary society in Dublin. This status did not prevent her moving to London after her husband's death. Many Irish literary people, such as George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) and William Butler Yeats (1865-1939), gathered there. Consequently, in Ireland and in England, Oscar Wilde had many opportunities to see prominent people. In this environment, he probably established his basis as a writer and refined his eye for art.

Speranza also influenced Wilde through her nationalistic ideas. When she was born, the movement for Catholic Emancipation was at its peak. After enactment of the law of Catholic Emancipation, a new movement, which aimed to set up an Irish government, sprung up. The leaders of this movement were the members of Young Ireland established in 1842, such as Thomas Osborne Davis (1814-45), Charles Gavan Duffy (1816-1903) and John Blake Dillon (1816-66). They wrote nationalistic poems and articles which were coloured by Irish myths and folktales, in their weekly newspaper, *The Nation*, founded in 1842. The family of Speranza's father and that of

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[8] Alexandre Dumas, *The Glacier Land*, translated by Mrs. W. R. Wilde (London: Simms and M'Intyre, 1852); and W. F. G. Canz, *The First Temptation, or "Eritis sicut Deus", A Philosophical Romance,* Vols. I-III, translated by Mrs. William R. Wilde (London: T. Cautley Newby, 1863). Apart from these works, she translated some novels. Walter Hamilton had already discussed this in his book, *The Aesthetic Movement in England* (3rd ed.; London: Reeves & Turner, 1882), p. 97.

[9] For example, *Poems by Speranza* (1864) and *Ancient Cures, Charms, and Usages of Ireland: Contributions to Irish Lore* (1890) were published. She also contributed many essays to magazines in Dublin and London.

[10] Lady Wilde, *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms and Superstitions of Ireland* (London: Ward & Downey, 1888).

[11] Coakley, *Oscar Wilde: The Importance of Being Irish*, pp. 7-8.

her mother were unionists who favoured the separation of Northern Ireland from the south. However, it was said that many Irish people were attracted by Young Ireland's works in that newspaper, and Speranza was one of them.

This enthusiastic acceptance by the Irish people was caused by their hatred of the English domination of Ireland at that time. This domination was very deep-rooted and can be traced back to the twelfth century. In the 1840s, Ireland was in a critical situation because of the Great Famine. At that time, the population of Ireland stood at approximately eight million. Most were poor farmers living on potatoes. However, the potato harvest was seriously damaged by blight and typhoid fever prevailed at the same time. As a result, it is said that hundreds of thousands of Irish people died.[12] Many people emigrated to the United States. It was not easy for them, but it was the only way to escape from this dreadful famine. In "The Famine Year" in *Poems* (1864), Speranza sings of the Irish people's sorrow thus:

> **WEARY** men, what reap ye? – Golden corn for the stranger.
> What sow ye? – Human corpses that wait for the avenger.
> Fainting forms, hunger-stricken, what see you in the offing?
> Stately ships to bear our food away, amid the stranger's scoffing.
> There's a proud array of soldiers – what do they round your door?
> They guard our masters' granaries from the thin hands of the poor.
> Pale mothers, wherefore weeping? – Would to God that we were dead –
> Our children swoon before us, and we cannot give them bread.[13]

It is understandable that the situation described above in Ireland influenced young Speranza's heart. Although members of her family were unionists, she became a supporter of Young Ireland. The reason for the change inside of her was explained by Oscar Wilde[14] and W. B. Yeats.[15] They say that she was moved by Thomas Davis' poems of idealism. Perhaps it led her to write poems and to publish Irish folktales later. The strong impression made by Davis' poems was tied up with her emotions about the sad history of Ireland in the relationship with England, and then they were mixed with the Irish people's passion at that time. It is possible that they

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[12] Cathai Poirteir (ed.), *The Great Famine* (Dublin: Mercier Press, 1995); and Peter Gray, *The Irish Famine* (London: Thames and Hudson., 1995).
[13] Speranza (Lady Wilde), "The Famine Year", *Poems* (2nd ed.; Glasgow: Cameron & Ferguson, 1871), p. 10.
[14] Wilde, "The Irish Poets of '48", *Irish Poets and Poetry of the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 32-3.
[15] W. B. Yeats, *Tribute to Thomas Davis* (Oxford: B.H. Blackwell, Cork University Press, 1947), p. 17.

urged her to support Young Ireland. Through using her ability in many languages, from 1846 she helped to publish their newspaper, *The Nation*. She also began to write patriotic poems in that bulletin, such as "To Ireland" and "The Year of Revolution", and gradually became one of the central members of this movement.

She showed her viewpoint in a dramatic way in the trial of Duffy. During the Great Famine, Davis died, and an Irish lawyer, Daniel O'Connell's (1775-1847) attempt to solve the problems constitutionally between Ireland and England failed. Duffy was arrested and tried for treason. Speranza wrote an article for *The Nation* (29 July 1848) whose title is "Jacta Alea Est" [The Die is Cast].[16] This article encouraged Irish people to arm and to fight for their liberty. She had been one of the most popular people in Dublin. Even when Oscar Wilde went to the United States more than thirty years later, he was introduced as "Speranza's son".[17] This demonstrates her high popularity at that time. In her articles, in her poems, she speaks of people's sadness and of her anger for Irish social system. Perhaps she was not only a woman poet but also a symbol of the Young Ireland movement.

When his mother was involved in this national movement started by Young Ireland or O'Connell, Oscar Wilde was not yet born. However, we may say that some talks caused by his mother's taking part in this movement had left a strong impression on his little heart. Hirai Hiroshi states that Speranza's activity for Ireland was her relieving the tedium.[18] As evidence, he cites the fact that, after her father's death, she had been living with her mother, was feeling lonely and was looking for stimulus, and that she had received a pension from the English government in 1890. However, it is impossible for me to agree with this analysis. The fact that she had plenty of time and received a pension later, cannot prove her lack of sincerity at that time. If anything, the dreadful situation in Ireland, especially during the Great Famine, touched her heart. The fact that, although both her parents' families were Protestant believers, she involved herself whole-heartedly in that movement, demonstrates her devotion. To live in Ireland at that difficult time and to see how bad conditions there

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[16] Robert Harborough Sherard, *The Life of Oscar Wilde* (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1906) p. 53. One copy of this article, which escaped from suppression, is stored at the National Library of Dublin. It is printed in No.304 of *The Nation* which was published in Dublin on 29 July 1848. It seems to be the only one which exists.

[17] *Irish Nation*, 14 January 1882 (New York: Irish Nation, 1882).

[18] Hirai Hiroshi, *Osukā Wairudo no shōgai* [The Life of Oscar Wilde] (Tokyo: Shōhakusha, 1950), p. 8.

were, must have been significant experiences for her. They are also described in her poems. I cannot accept they were written only to kill time or for self-advertisement. They show her passion for her country and it could not be easily extinguished. Therefore, it is probable that her son, Oscar Wilde, would be told the story about Ireland by her and become aware of some things related to the national movement of Ireland.

In Wilde's work based on his lecture on 5 April 1882 in San Francisco, he quotes his mother's poem. He also quoted some poems by O'Connell and recited poems by members of Young Ireland, such as Davis and Duffy. He admired these poems thus:

> The poetry and music of Ireland," he said, "have been not merely the luxury of the rich, but the very bulwark of patriotism, the very seed and flower of liberty."[19]

> and indeed I do not know anything more wonderful, or more characteristic of the Celtic genius, than the quick artistic spirit in which we adapted ourselves to the English tongue – the Saxon took our lands from us and left them desolate, we took their language and added new beauties to it – [20]

The influence of his mother's nationalistic and patriotic aspects can be seen in the quotations above. In the same year, in Boston he also saw John Boyle O'Reilly. He was one of his mother's friends and a member of the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States, which was a sister organisation of the Irish Republican Brotherhood formed in 1858. Wilde had a close relationship with him, because he had published Wilde's poem, "Rome Unvisited", in the weekly newspaper, *The Boston Pilot*. O'Reilly was the editor of that newspaper, and it was Wilde's first work to be published in the United States. As was said above, like his mother, he was also at the near point of the Irish national movement.

His interest in that movement did not stop after he had grown up. Wilde had been supporting Home Rule for Ireland through his whole life. For example, there were two men with whom he became involved. One is Michael Davitt (1846-1906). He formed the Land League helped by Fenians and became a leader of the movement.

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[19] Wilde, "The Irish Poets of '48", Pepper (ed.), *Irish Poets and Poetry of the Nineteenth Century,* p. 28.
[20] *ibid.*, p. 34.

The aim of this movement was to acquire land-ownership for the Irish tenant farmers. He started a magazine, *Labour World* (1890-1), and played an important role in forming Irish public opinion. He had been imprisoned for Fenian activities in 1870-7. He was imprisoned again in 1881-2 and wrote *Leaves from a Prison Diary*. When Wilde published the second edition of *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898), he asked Davitt to write a preface. I think he sympathised with Davitt's sufferings and regarded him as one who would understand his message in that work.[21]

The other is Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-91). Although members of his family were Protestant landowners, he was a politician and a leader of the Home Rule movement for Ireland. For his campaign for tenants' rights, he was arrested in 1881 and sent to Kilmainham Gaol in Dublin with his colleagues. In the following year he was released by the Kilmainham Treaty which introduced special legal treatment by the government to settle the issue of arrears in land rent. However, he was accused of being involved in the murder of the Irish Chief Secretary in 1882 which was revealed by his alleged letters published in the *London Times* in 1887. Then the Parnell Commission was established by the government to investigate whether the letters were forgeries. Wilde attended some of the sessions and was interested in the case. The sketch of Wilde for the Parnell Comission by S. P. Hall was left in the National Portrait Gallery, London. This episode indicates that Wilde was interested in the Irish national movement at that time and supported Home Rule sufficiently to be called by that Commission. Wilde also had in his possession thirteen volumes of the report of the Parnell Commission. They are found in his library list for auction in April 1895. It is certain that he supported these two leaders of the Irish national movement. Coakley says that some epigrams in *A Woman of No Importance* (1893) were written to fight prejudice against Parnell and the Land League.[22] Moreover, Owen Dudley Edwards points out the reference by Wilde in "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" (1891) in which he makes an accusation against journalists of having a biased attitude towards Parnell.[23]

Judging from these facts pointed out above, Wilde was strongly influenced by his mother's nationalistic attitude. Therefore, his Irish background should not be

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[21] *Letters,* p. 870.
[22] Coakley, *Oscar Wilde: The Importance of Being Irish*, p. 206.
[23] Owen Dudley Edwards, *The Fireworks of Oscar Wilde* (London: Barrie & Jenkins Ltd, 1989), p. 180.

regarded as having only a minor influence on him. However, as was said in the previous part of this section, he made very few references to his Irish background. For example, his lecture entitled "The Irish Poets of '48" in San Francisco in 1882 quoted above can be pointed out as one of them. This lecture was presented during his tour of the United States and Canada. In this tour, he gave about 140 lectures. However, as far as I can confirm, this lecture is the only one in which he refers to his Irish background. In addition, Ireland was never the setting for his fiction or plays. It is possible that he avoided dealing with this issue intentionally. Although he was interested in it, he tried to stay away from it. It is also possible that the reason he acted that way was only because he did not want to lose his position in English society. It could be part of the reason, but I think it was not the whole of it. If it had been solely for the purpose of protecting his own interests in England, he would not have made fun of English people's actions in his plays or blamed for English society of deception in his critical essays. For example, in *A Woman of No Importance* (1893), he writes:

> LORD ILLINGWORTH
> Silliest word in our language, and one knows so well the popular idea of health. The English country gentleman galloping after a fox – the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable.[24]

In addition, he says the following in "The Soul of Man Under Socialism":

> Indeed, so completely has man's personality been absorbed by his possessions that the English law has always treated offences against a man's property with far more severity than offences against his person, and property is still the test of complete citizenship.[25]

Moreover, his mother came to London to live in 1879. Although her passion for Irish independence might have waned since her youth, if he had intended to minimise any danger arising from his Irish background, he could have tried to make his mother stay some distance away from him. Actually, she established a salon in London and it became a meeting place for Irish residents.

In this thesis, I do not deny that Wilde wished to hold an important place in

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[24] Wilde, "A Woman of no Importance", *Works*, p. 471.
[25] Wilde, "The Soul of Man Under Socialism", *Works*, p. 1178.

English society. (His success in English society gave rise to another issue which will be dealt with in Chapter 4.) However, it was only one aspect of the reason he distanced himself from his Irish background. If anything, the possibility that he attempted to see it from another viewpoint in the different level should be pointed out. In fact, not from the viewpoint, 'Ireland or England' and 'Irish or English', but from another one, he intended to understand his Irish background and his being Irish in English society. Perhaps he looked for the way which would not 'choose one of the alternatives'. For example, he refers to genetics in the following way:

> By revealing to us the absolute mechanism of all action, and so freeing us from the self-imposed and trammelling burden of moral responsibility, the scientific principle of Heredity has become, as it were, the warrant for the contemplative life. It has shown us that we are never less free than when we try to act. It has hemmed us round with the nets of the hunter, and written upon the wall the prophecy of our doom. We may not watch it, for it is within us. We may not see it, save in a mirror that mirrors the soul. It is Nemesis without her mask. It is the last of the Fates, and the most terrible. It is the only one of the Gods whose real name we know. [26]

This reference can be regarded as his sharp criticism of the negative side of genetics. At that time, eugenics presented by Francis Galton (1822-1911) was widespread. It arose from Evolutionism which was advocated by Charles Robert Darwin (1809-82) and aimed to make artificial evolution using the theory of Natural Selection. Moreover, in the Victorian era, another strange theory existed. This was phrenology (cranioscopy) presented by an Austrian doctor, Franz Gall (1758-1828). It attempted to assess individual superiority by measuring one's skull and defined Caucasians as a superior race. Linking these ideas, genetics in the late nineteenth century was in great danger of manufacturing racial prejudice. William Greenslade analysed the process whereby the doctors and scholars placed great emphasis on genetic fatalism. [27] Accordingly although Wilde supported the nationalist movement in Ireland, why he steered clear of his Irish background is understandable. He intended to part from choosing one of the alternatives based on the standard of superiority. If he came near to it, and if he appreciated Irish culture, he could be caught in the dichotomy which he denied.

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[26] Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", *Works*, p. 1137.
[27] William Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture and the Novel 1880 – 1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 197-198.

According to the facts in this section, it is clear that in his mind he supported the Irish movement which aimed for independence. However, he did not try to achieve it by political or military methods. For example, he supported Parnell, but he did not become deeply involved with the actions of Parnell's group. Some people may regard this as self-protection in English society. It is partly true. However, it also reinforces my reference to his different point of view. Wilde's viewpoint was not that of an Englishman who despises the Irish, nor of an Irishman who looks down on the English. I think his views were far from such a dichotomy.

Why did he deny that dichotomy? One conjecture is that he was too close to the nationalist movement of Ireland to take part in it. Although not active in the front line, his mother was one of the central members of that movement. Sometimes, quite violent political situations probably arose around him. It is doubtful that when he was young, he could understand the meaning of these situations and accept them by himself. Perhaps his impressions of a kind of disgust made a wall between him and that movement which was based on the hostility of Ireland and England towards each other. (Even Speranza could be sick of this kind of conflict. After her marriage, she did not act so forcefully for that movement.)

To conclude, the points given below are clear. For his mother, Speranza, it was likely that the Great Famine was a significant factor in her changing her attitude. Influenced by Young Ireland, although members of her family were Protestants, she joined the nationalist movement of Ireland. It was not simply to fill her time but an action taken after serious consideration, so Oscar Wilde was affected by her. In his lecture, he admired the rhetoric of O'Connell and literary works of the members of Young Ireland such as Davis and Duffy. In addition, he saw O'Reilly who supported the nationalist movement of Ireland in the United States. His admiration for Davitt and Parnell, the leaders of that movement, showed us that he supported that movement until late in his life. However, his works which deal with his Irish background are few. This can be interpreted as his self-protection in English society, but it also hints at another point of view. He tried to understand this issue outside the dichotomy which is 'Ireland or England' and 'Irish or English'. It is Oscar Wilde's refutal of dichotomization. However, the research to prove this has not yet been completed. In the next section, this issue will be further analysed from a different angle.

2.2. Catholicism and Protestantism

For Wilde, the religious element was also important. I think that it is necessary for scholars to study his ideas about religion along with his and his parents' Irish background. His relatives included several ordained clergymen of the established Protestant Church. It is probable that the religious relationship between him and his parents would influence the philosophy which came into his late works such as "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" (1891) and *De Profundis* (1897). In this section, the religious situation in Ireland and his parents' attitude towards Catholicism and Protestantism will be analysed.

It is said that the ancestors of Wilde came from Holland. This view was adopted by some early biographers of Wilde. However, we have to say it is doubtful, because the information was provided only by the words of Speranza. She also presented other information which brings out another view. This claims that she was a descendant of Dante Alighieri (1265-1321). However, there is no evidence for this story, either. Merlin Holland's statement, "her great-grand father had been a builder in County Durham, where the Elgees had long been labourers and bricklayers, and came to Ireland during an Irish building boom of the 1730s",[28] seems to be the most credible one. The Wildes had been Protestant episcopalians (Church of Ireland, the established religion) for generations. The religious problems were compounded by the complicated history of Ireland.

There are still many conflicts between Catholics and Protestants in the twenty-first century in Northern Ireland. The main reason for conflict is the dissatisfaction of the Catholics there, who were separated from what later became the Republic of Ireland in the South. In 1800, the Act of Union was enacted, and the Irish Parliament disappeared. It meant that Ireland was absorbed by Britain. (Ireland did not have a Parliament from 1801 to1921.) It was likely that Irish Parliament members, who were Protestants, would accept it to maintain their social status and their rights. Some of them had seats in the English Parliament. However, it is clear that integration of the English and the Irish Parliaments brought about confusion in Ireland. The members of Parliament had to stay in London most of the year; consequently they

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[28] Holland, *The Wilde Album*, p. 13.

could not help becoming absent landowners. Most Catholics in Ireland were engaged in agriculture, and most of them suffered from poverty as tenants under absent landowners. The Catholics' discontent grew, and opposition between the Catholics and the Protestants in Ireland became more and more serious. The leader of the Catholic movement, which had demanded total independence, was O'Connell, who was dealt with in the previous section. In 1828, he was elected to the Parliament, but the government did not allow him to take his seat. The reason was that he was a Catholic believer, and the law prohibited Catholics from holding public office. However, demonstrations supporting O'Connell occurred in various places in Ireland. They demanded that the government permit O'Connell to take his seat. In 1829, the government amended the laws and gave him a seat in the Parliament. Then O'Connell aimed for stronger self-government in Ireland. However, his campaign was suppressed, and he was arrested in 1843. During these incidents, Young Ireland was established, and Speranza began to be involved in it, as was said in the previous section.

As stated above, the religious question in Irish history is very complicated. On one occasion, it brought out conflicts between the Catholics and the Protestants, on another occasion it caused battles between Ireland and England. In addition, in Irish history, there are very close links between the religious elements and social and economic ones. This fact made the situation more complicated. It is possible that Wilde's relatives experienced the complexity of religion in Ireland, especially between Catholicism and Protestantism. His relatives probably had faced the serious problems of religion. Ralph Wilde was the elder brother of Thomas who was Oscar Wilde's grandfather. He entered Trinity College in Dublin. That college was the symbol of Protestantism in Ireland. Then he became a clergyman. This fact demonstrates that, although the Wildes were tossed about by the waves of the complicated situation of religion in Ireland, their connection with religion continued in the generation of Oscar Wilde's father, William Robert Wilde (1815-76). William had two elder brothers and two elder sisters, at least. His two elder brothers, Ralph and John, also became clergymen. In addition, one of William's elder sisters married a clergyman, William Noble. These facts reflected their religious purity. However, it also can be interpreted that these actions aimed to emphasise their relationship with the Church of Ireland as Protestants. The religious atmosphere, which included social and political elements,

could have some influence on Oscar Wilde. These clergymen were Oscar Wilde's great-uncle and uncles; in particular, John stayed with Oscar Wilde in England.[29] Through his personal contact with them, Oscar Wilde must have had some understanding of the delicate and complicated religious situation of his relatives in Ireland. Rather than turning away from religion, as was the general impression, he came under the influence of Catholicism and Protestantism. Moreover, in so far as they were living in Ireland, religion was related to the political and social situation. Although his relatives were adherents of the Church of Ireland, the religious position of Wilde's relatives had been jolted by many factors in Ireland. It is likely that that of Oscar Wilde would also be variable.

One fact which shows his uncertainty between Catholicism and Protestantism can be found. It appeared as an article written by Revd. Lawrence Charles Prideaux Fox in 1905.[30] According to this article, he was asked by Lady Wilde to baptise her two children, and at a later date he did so in the presence of Lady Wilde at Glencree which is about fifty miles away from Dublin. Quoting this article, Stuart Mason introduces an interesting fact:

> Wilde, however, declared more than once to intimate friends that he had a distinct recollection as a child of being christened in a Catholic church.[31]

If this article is accurate, Wilde was eight or nine years old at that time. However, no additional evidence to prove its accuracy has been found. Consequently, it is unclear whether in fact Wilde was baptised as a child. However, at least it can be pointed out that there has been no definite refutation of that article. There are many disputes about Wilde's biographical facts. In some cases, Wilde's friends and relatives corrected misunderstandings. For example, in 1905, after Wilde's death, a strange rumour came into existence. It said that Wilde was still alive. Robert Ross, one of Wilde's friends, denied this rumour with the editor of *The Sphere* using the photograph of Wilde's tomb. If Revd. Fox's article had been a complete misunderstanding, any denial could have

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[29] *Letters,* p. 18.

[30] This article is printed in *Donahoe's Magazine* (Boston. Mass., 1879-1908) which was founded by Patrick Donahoe. This article is part of a series entitled "People I Have Met" and was issued in May 1905 (53,4,397). This magazine was absorbed by the periodical magazine, *Catholic World* (Paramus, N.J.; Paulist Fathers, 1865-1971) in 1908.

[31] Stuart Mason, *Bibliography of Oscar Wilde* (London: T. Werner Lurie Ltd., 1914), p. 118.

been written by Wilde's acquaintances. Therefore, the fact that it was left uncertain means that Wilde's acquaintances accepted the possibility of his having been baptised as a child. In other words, at that time Wilde had some elements which let others regard that article as truth. In fact, Wilde's stance on religion was not fixed but vacillated between Catholicism and Protestantism.

To think about the religious background of his childhood, it is necessary for us to recall the position of his mother, Speranza. Generally speaking, young children cannot decide on religious issues by themselves. Whether Wilde's baptism in his childhood may be true or not, it is likely that his mother would be concerned about his religion. As was said, when she married William Wilde, she was involved in the independence movement in Ireland. Unfortunately, compared with political references, there is not much clear evidence which demonstrates Speranza's involvement with Catholicism. However, there are some references showing she had a quite positive attitude towards it. For example, Oscar Wilde's letter to William Walsford Ward (1854-1932), one of his friends at Oxford, in 1876 states that she had an intimate friend who was an Irish poet and who converted to Catholicism. His name was Aubrey de Vere, Oscar Wilde uses the word, "great", for him.[32] This view is either Oscar Wilde's or Speranza's, and they both appreciated this poet. It is possible that she was affected by Catholicism through association with people who took part in the independence movement in Ireland. Although there is no record of her conversion to Catholicism, there was a possibility that she thought about it. We may say that her thought had some effect on her son, Oscar Wilde. Revd. Fox's article states that Lady Wilde took her two sons to the Catholic mass read by him and then asked him to baptise them. This can be interpreted as meaning that she made her sons more Irish by making them Catholics. Apart from whether or not this reference is true, Oscar Wilde's religious position must have deeply tied up with his mother's attitude. When we think of the fact that there were three clergymen amongst his relatives, he was possibly closer to religious issues than one expects. The idea of becoming involved in Catholicism in his time at Oxford had started to form in his mind. William Wilde was more hostile to Catholicism and while he might not have objected to infant baptism, he seems to have greatly disliked the thought of Oscar Wilde being an adult Catholic.

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[32] *Letters*, p. 32.

Oscar Wilde studied at Trinity College in Dublin, which was a symbol of Protestantism, as has been noted. It is said that until the 1960s it had been a sin for Catholic believers to study there without a Catholic bishop's permission. He entered this Irish Protestant university in 1871 and spent three years there. His days there can be called a sequence of glorious achievements. For example, he passed the exams and was elected a Queen's Scholar only a few weeks after his enrolment. In addition, his performance in Classics was awarded a University Scholarship. Especially being given the Berkeley Gold Medal for poetry was a great honour for him. At that time, he encountered two teachers who were important in his life. One was Robert Yelverton Tyrrell (1844-1914) who was elected the professor of Latin in 1871 and that of Greek in 1880, and the other was John Pentland Mahaffy (1839-1919) who was elected the first professor of ancient history in 1869. They were stern teachers, but Wilde was a favourite with them. However, it is said that in his final year at that college, he was frequently depressed. Perhaps one of the reasons for his depression was that he began to think of Catholicism more seriously.[33] Therefore, his tutor, Mahaffy, recommended him to go to England.[34] I think he expected that that would release him from the narrow confines of religion.

In his later years, Wilde looked back on his life and said that there were two turning points: one was to be put in prison and the other was to enter Oxford. In 1874, he entered Magdalen College, Oxford, and it is a well-known fact that Wilde was thinking of conversion to Catholicism at that time. Therefore, his reference to his days at Oxford alluded to religion. For example, some of his letters present evidence of his views about Catholicism and his conversion during his time at college.[35]

He travelled to Italy twice, for the first time in spring of 1875 and the second time in spring of 1877. On these trips, he visited some Italian cities, such as Florence, Bologna, Verona, Venice, Milan and Rome. His first trip was only for one week. However, it was his first trip abroad. Moreover, he had shown his talent for learning classic literature and was educated about Renaissance art. Consequently that trip probably made a great impression on him. The way in which he writes in his letters

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[33] Sakai Satoshi says that Wilde had begun to regard Catholicism as an important issue for him since the days at Trinity College. Sakai Satoshi, "Katorishizumu" [Catholicism], Yamada Masaru (ed.), *Osukā Wairudo jiten* [Encyclopaedia of Oscar Wilde] (Tokyo: Hokuseidōshoten, 1997), p. 88.
[34] Satsuma Tatsuo, "Toriniti korijji" [Trinity College], Yamada, *Osukā Wairudo jiten,* p. 265.
[35] See his letters, under "Oxford", *Letters*, pp. 3-73.

about the works of art which he saw in each Italian city demonstrates his excitement. These letters are remarkable in that he refers to many works of art which were related to Catholicism. For example, in the letter to his father from Verona describing Etruscan art, he also discusses the beauty of the characters in Italian missals and bibles. In addition, he describes a solemn funeral with monks who were dressed in white linen robes.[36] In his letters to his mother from Milan, he reports on wonderful Catholic works of art. For instance, when he saw the works which depict the life of Mary and Christ by Giotto at the Baptistery in Padua, he praised them in this way:

> Of the beauty and purity of sentiment, the clear transparent colour, bright as the day it was painted, and the harmony of the whole building, I am unable to tell you. He is the first of all painters. We stayed over an hour in the Baptistery filled with wonder and reverence and above all love for the scenes he has painted.[37]

Moreover, in that letter, he points out the magnificence of the interior of Milan Cathedral and a set of drawings and sketches by Raffaelli in the Bible which he saw at the Ambrosian Library. These letters demonstrate his uncommon interest in Catholicism through works of art. In addition, in a letter, which was sent before his second trip to Italy in 1877, to Richard Reginald Harding (1857-1932), one of his friends at Oxford, he states his hope thus:

> My dear kitten, I start for Rome on Sunday; Mahaffy comes as far as Genoa with me: and I hope to see the golden dome of St Peter's and the Eternal City by Tuesday night.
>
> This is an era in my life, a crisis. I wish I could look into the seeds of time and see what is coming.[38]

Noting these references by him, some people interpret that Wilde was not fascinated by Catholicism but by those works only as works of art. It is true that he frequently referred to the works of art in his letters. However, he was perhaps interested in both Catholicism and Catholic works of art, and they were mixed in his mind. Ronald Sutherland-Gower (1845-1916), one of his friends when at Oxford, reports that the walls in Wilde's room were filled with photographs of the Pope and

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[36] *Letters,* pp. 10-2.
[37] *ibid.*, pp. 11-2.
[38] *ibid.*, p. 43.

Cardinal Henry Edward Manning (1808-92) in 1875.[39] Moreover, when he went to Rome in 1877, he saw the Pope, Pius IX. Unfortunately, no direct reference by him stating his impression of this audience exists. However, one finds deep emotion in his poems. Those poems, such as "Ave Maria Gratia Plena", "Urbs Sara Æterna" and "Easter Day", were written from 1877 to 1880. In particular, "Rome Unvisited" portrays his emotion clearly:

> O joy to see before I die
> The only God-anointed King,
> And hear the silver trumpets ring
> A triumph as He passes by!
> [...]
> I may have run the glorious race,
> And caught the torch while yet aflame,
> And called upon the holy name
> Of Him who now doth hide His face.[40]

This poem was written after his audience with Pius IX with his friend at Oxford, David Hunter Blair (1853-1939), and was originally entitled "Graffiti d' Italia II Arona". These poems, which were referred to above, are filled with Catholic atmosphere. Consequently, Catholic works of art played a role in stimulating his interest, but this developed further, expanding deeper into Catholicism.

The quotation given below is from a book written by Blair:

> My conversion, needless to say, made not the slightest difference to my affectionate intimacy with "Bouncer" Ward and Oscar Wilde, and our intercourse continued quite unbroken. Ward merely shrugged his shoulders with a smile, without any word of criticism or censure; but Oscar was greatly interested in the step I had taken[41]

We can argue that Wilde was eager to be a Catholic believer. However, for him, the situation was not straightforward. Although he had strong leanings toward Catholicism, he did not go so far as to convert to it. There were some elements which made the situation complicated. They were the existence of his father, William Wilde,

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[39] Ronald Gower, *My Reminiscences* (London: Kegan Paul, 1895), p. 134.
[40] Wilde, "Rome Unvisited", *CW,* Volume I, pp. 9-10.
[41] Sir David Oswald Hunter Blair, *In Victorian Days and other Papers* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1939), p. 125.

and his teacher, Mahaffy.

Sir William Robert Wilde (1815-76) was famous as an ophthalmologist and surgeon. His books had even been used as textbooks for medical students. In 1863 he was named an ophthalmologist for the Queen and in the following year he received a knighthood. He was one of the most famous doctors of the time. On the other hand, he was a man fond of women. Although it was not unusual for Irish gentlemen of high society in those days, he had had some mistress before his marriage and had illegitimate children. Moreover, he had been suspected of rape. (Later, it was revealed that it was a false charge by the woman who claimed to have been raped by him.) However, it is certain that he canalised his energies into presenting Celtic culture. He was a member of the council of the Celtic Society. It aimed to publish Irish historical and literary documents.[42] Some members of Young Ireland, such as Duffy, were also members of this council. As Davis Coakley says, because of this association, William Wilde's books, essays and lectures were viewed positively by the members of Young Ireland.[43] In addition, I think his wife, Lady Wilde's influence on *The Nation* cannot be ignored. The reviewers of his books published in that newspaper were favourable, but he was not influenced by Catholicism. Some references made his religious position clear. For example, after his trip to Italy in 1875, Oscar Wilde began to attend services at a Catholic church on the other side of the Magdalen bridge with David Hunter Blair. However, at that time, Oscar Wilde did not turn to Catholicism, and Blair explained the reason, "If he became a Catholic his father would cut him off with a shilling."[44] Moreover, Robert Ross states this in his letter to Adela Schuster in 1900:

> he [Oscar Wilde] wanted to be a Catholic. [...]
> Shortly after his release when Mr Adey and I left him at Berneval, he made friends with a French priest and was very nearly received [into Catholicism] then, he told me, and of course you know that as a young man he was only prevented from doing so by his father and Professor Mahaffy.[45]

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[42] William Wilde published some books about Irish culture as well as medical studies. For example, W. R. Wilde, *The Closing Year of Dean Swift's Life* (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1849); W. R. Wilde, *Irish Popular Superstitions* (Dublin: James Mcglashan, 1852); and Sir William Robert Wilde, *Memoir of Gabriel Beranger, and his Labours in the Case of Irish Art and Antiquities, from 1760 to 1780* (Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, 1880).
[43] Coakley, *Oscar Wilde: The Importance of Being Irish*, p. 21.
[44] Pearson, *The Life of Oscar Wilde*, p. 37.
[45] *Letters*, p. 1226.

It is certain that William Wilde was against his son's conversion to Catholicism.

Although he had two faces – a doctor of authority and a lustful person – William Wilde seemed a dignified person to his son, Oscar. There are no signs which give evidence of Oscar Wilde's resistance towards his father. It is possible to deduce various reasons. Oscar Wilde sympathised with his mother, whose pride was possibly hurt by slander about her husband's immoral activities. However, it is possible that he hoped for peace with all members of his family including his father. I think the issue of what was the meaning of family for Oscar Wilde had something to do with his sorrow at the very early death of his younger sister, Isola, in 1867. In any case, for Oscar Wilde, his father had been a major influence, and he was perhaps sorry about William's unsympathetic attitude towards his interest in Catholicism. Referring to the fact that they went to Catholic gatherings and functions together, Blair reports Oscar Wilde's situation thus:

> "I am sure," said Oscar, "that if I had become a Catholic at that time he would have cast me off altogether, and that he would do the same to-day. [...] Lucky you, my dear Dunsky [Blair's nickname], to be, as you are, independent of your father and free to do what you like. *My* case is very different."[46]

Moreover, it was probable that his relatives would feel hurt at his intention to convert to Catholicism. It is easy to imagine that his two uncles, who were clergymen of the Church of Ireland, were against his conversion to Catholicism. In addition, one document is found as evidence of his relative's objection. That is the will written by Henry Wilson who was Oscar Wilde's half-brother. Oscar Wilde had been regarded as an heir with his elder brother. When this half-brother died in 1877, his elder brother inherited 2000 pounds, but Oscar Wilde was given only 100 pounds. Moreover, the will stated that if Oscar Wilde converted to Catholicism within five years, he would lose the right to receive this money. In the letter to Harding, Oscar Wilde expressed his anger and sorrow for his half-brother's lack of understanding of his interest in Catholicism.[47]

His father was opposed to his conversion, and there were no relatives who supported him. It would probably have been even too much to ask his mother to

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[46] Blair, *In Victorian Days and other Papers*, p. 126.
[47] *Letters*, p. 54.

support his conversion in secret. In fact, in terms of becoming a Catholic believer, he must have been isolated in his family.

Another person who was strongly opposed to his conversion for another reason, was John Mahaffy. Wilde seemed to be the most brilliant student whom he had ever taught. After entering Magdalen College, Wilde helped him to read proofs for his books. As stated, Mahaffy was a very stern teacher, but it was likely that their relationship was very friendly. The fact that they met up with each other during two of Wilde's trips to Italy demonstrates their friendship. However, to meet Mahaffy in Italy in 1877 had a greater significance for Wilde than he expected. Knowing Wilde's interest in Catholicism, it is said that Mahaffy was enraged. One of the reasons was that he, who was also a Protestant clergyman, was displeased with it. Another reason was possibly that he thought Wilde was wasting his time and talent through giving himself up to Catholicism. At that time, Wilde failed to acquire the scholarship. Perhaps Mahaffy thought that Wilde was wasting his talent by becoming absorbed in Catholicism. To make Wilde return to a more serious academic attitude, Mahaffy took him to Greece from Genoa by force. As Wilde wrote his letter to Harding, he could not help changing his plans for the trip.[48]

Wilde had not been happy at first, but eventually, he spent a good deal of time in Greece. He had a wide knowledge of classical art, especially about Hellenism. Therefore, it is easy to imagine that he was very glad to confirm his learning through visiting historical sites and seeing Greek works of art. Historical ruins and exhibitions in museums demonstrated to him the wonders of Greek culture which he could not fully appreciate only through books or lectures. In addition, the authoritative expert and a clergyman of the Church of Ireland, Mahaffy, explained these wonders and deliberately led him away from Catholicism. It is likely that his interest in Greek art increased at the expense of Catholicism. At that time, he was greatly fascinated by Greek works of art. Thus, he stayed there for about one month. As a result, he was even late for the beginning of the new term at Oxford and fined.[49]

It is said that after visiting Greece with Mahaffy, he quickly lost his

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[48] *ibid.*, p. 44.

[49] Wilde wrote a letter to the Dean of Arts to tell that he would be late for the beginning of the new term: *ibid.*, p. 45.

interest in Catholicism.[50] However, it is impossible to agree with such views, because after his stay in Greece, he went to Rome to see the Pope, Pius IX. However various reasons there were for his audience with the Pope, it was clear that he was deeply moved. As was shown above, his poems written after the audience demonstrate this. Therefore, it is not correct that Wilde's interest in Catholicism disappeared from his mind. Through seeing many fine and beautiful things in Greece and having them explained by Mahaffy, his knowledge was inspired through seeing these things in concrete form. When he was absorbed in the culture of Greece, in Mahaffy's view, I think he was removed from the issue of whether or not he should be a Catholic believer.

We may note a similar reaction in Mishima. Visiting Greece, Mishima says:

> Greek people worshiped *appearance*, it was a great philosophy. Until Christianity invented *spirit*, people did not need *spirit* and lived proudly.[51]

Mishima also had a different perception of Greece from that of Christianity. Then he, who did not have a background in Christianity, saw Greece in terms of a different dichotomy: the spirit and the body. It is another way to understand the experience of Greece. This issue will be analysed in the next chapter.

On the other hand, Wilde's experiences with Catholicism, even if passive, since his childhood under the complicated situation in Ireland, had not easily been forgotten. Therefore, at that time, twin beliefs in Protestantism and Catholicism co-existed within him and probably kept a precarious balance. However, there is a further point to be considered. Although his father died in 1876, he had been strongly opposed to his son's conversion. Mahaffy, a clergyman of Church of Ireland, also opposed it. In addition, there were Protestant clergymen amongst his relatives. Eventually, he gave up the idea of conversion to Catholicism. From Blair's statement, it is certain that Wilde was hurt by his father's lack of understanding and objection. In fact, keeping a precarious balance between Protestantism and Catholicism, I think he suffered from his decision against conversion throughout his life.

There is another fact related to his conversion. In 1878, which was his final year at Oxford, he received the Newdigate Prize for his poem, "Ravenna". This award

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[50] Hirai, *Osukā Wairudo no shōgai*, p. 35.
[51] Mishima, "Aporo no sakazuki", *Works* 26, p. 107.

was made for a poetry contest at Oxford and was one of the highest honours which a young poet could receive. The poem is based on his experience during his visit there. He uses skilful rhyme to sing the glory and sadness of the ancient city where Dante Alighieri and Lord Byron (1788-1824) lived. Although it was inspired by his stay in Italy, there are no references to Catholicism. On the contrary, turning his back on Catholicism is described as follows:

> O idle heart! O fond Hellenic dream!
> Ere long, with melancholy rise and swell,
> The evening chimes, the convent's vesper-bell,
> Struck on mine ears amid the amorous flowers.
> Alas! alas! these sweet and honied hours
> Had 'whelmed my heart like some encroaching sea,
> And drowned all thoughts of black Gethsemane.[52]

He recited this poem himself at the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford on 26 June 1878. Reciting his poem in front of many people, he was elated. However, referring to it, Blair reports as follows:

> "Good lines, I grant you; but humbug, rank humbug, coming from you. You know that all your sympathies were with the dethroned Pope, not with the invading and usurping King. You know they were." "Don't be angry, Dunsky [Blair's nickname]." urged Oscar. "You must know that I should never, never have won the Newdigate if I had taken the Pope's side against the King's."
>
> We parted friendlily after this passage. As I rose to go Oscar suddenly knelt and kissed my hand. "Pray for me, dear old Dunsky," he muttered, and I will swear that there were tears in his eyes. I never saw him again: he had passed out of my life, though not out of my memory, for ever.[53]

It is possible that this quotation highlights the complicated and difficult religious situation in Ireland. Wilde's case was the epitome of the religious problem of the Irish people. This viewpoint is also required to interpret his chauvinistic poem, "Ave Imperatrix" (1882).

Here, two points are clear. Firstly, his interest in Catholicism had faded. Having decided against conversion, he no longer directly referred to his interest in Catholicism. However, it does not mean that his interest had vanished completely. It

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[52] Wilde, "Ravenna", *CW,* Volume I, p. 51.
[53] Blair, *In Victorian Days and other Papers*, p. 138.

had been suppressed. This will be investigated in the analysis of his works, below. The second point is his feeling of guilt. Perhaps one of the reasons for William Wilde's and Mahaffy's stance against his conversion was consideration of the social position of Irish people in English society. It could be also because of Wilde's decision not to become converted, thus submitting to the pressure of English society's attitude towards Catholicism. It made him feel guilty, and this feeling seemed to remained throughout his life. This feeling may be similar to Mishima's in surviving World War II. This issue will be dealt with in Part III.

Because his relatives had experienced the complexity of religion in Ireland and because of their being clergymen, Wilde was closer to religion than one expects. Then also influenced by his mother and by the social situation in Ireland, he had become interested in Catholicism. He was very serious about it, but decided against converting to Catholicism. This was because of consideration towards his father and to his tutor, who was also his good friend. The beauty of Greek culture also contributed to his decision. However, as his poetry shows, his interest did not disappear completely. With regard to the conflict within Wilde between Catholicism and Protestantism, I think that Catholicism was suppressed deeply within him, and that he felt guilty about not converting because he wished to preserve his social status. These elements prepared the course for the next stage of his life.

2.3. A New Direction for Dichotomies within Wilde

What kind of spiritual development emerged for Wilde, who was interested in Catholicism but shut it up inside himself? At that time, he must have wondered what to do. When viewed in this way, his poem, "Helas!", shows us a hidden side. This poem was placed at the beginning of his *Poems* (1881). Wilde told Yeats that this poem was the one most characteristic of him.[54] It describes his regret and sorrow for the past when his spirit was pure. A possible interpretation is that his idea in this poem was his remorse for no longer being involved in Catholicism. The fact that the final three lines come from First Samuel,[55] supports this interpretation. His remorse in this poem was probably linked to the reference in *De Profundis*, which was written in prison in 1896-97, as follows, "I was King, and would have remained King, indeed, had I not let myself be lured into the imperfect world of coarse uncompleted passions, of appetite without distinction, desire without limit, and formless greed."[56] In addition, after graduation from Oxford, what he visited first in London was a Catholic monastery. This biographical fact can be pointed out as supporting evidence. Deciding not to convert to Catholicism probably means he was a Protestant believer immersed in the beauty of Greek culture like his tutor, Mahaffy. In this period when he returned from Greece and Italy, we may say that he must have been vacillating between Catholicism and Protestantism. It is said that his understanding of Catholicism was quite superficial, because there is little evidence that he studied Catholic doctrine.[57] It is certain that he did not leave any indication of research into Catholicism. However, I think this should not be regarded as his showing a superficial interest in it. It came from his predicament, which has been described above. In fact, he went up to the door, but he always turned back.

It was likely that this dilemma allowed him to see Catholicism objectively. For example, in 1869-70 decrees were issued by the First Vatican Council declaring the Pope infallible in matters of faith. In his letter, Wilde showed a critical attitude

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[54] W. B. Yeats *Autobiographies* (London: Macmillan, 1955), p. 286.
[55] "Then Saul said to Jon'a-than, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jon'a-than told him, and, said, I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that *was* in mine hand, *and*, lo, I must die." First Samuel (14:43).
[56] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1014.
[57] Hirai, *Osukā Wairudo no shōgai*, p. 35.

towards it using irony.[58] It could be also one of the reasons why he did not become a Catholic believer. This objectivity gradually led him in a new spiritual orientation. The germination of this could have been found in his interest in John Henry Newman (1801-90).

Newman is known as one of the members who propelled the Oxford Movement in the 1830s. That movement started with John Keble's (1792-1866) sermon, "National Apostasy". The aim of the movement was reformation of the Anglican Church and was prompted by the clergymen and theologians who were connected to the University of Oxford. At that time, the Anglican Church was in crisis because of its permissive attitude and the expansion of Catholicism. This movement insisted that all clergymen of the Anglican Church accepted the Book of Common Prayer as the basis of their spiritual belief. As the name shows, Oxford was one of the centres of this movement. Philippe Jullian says that Oxford was "the Anglican Rome",[59] and people were keener on religion than politics.[60] When Wilde entered Oxford, this movement was already in decline. However, he had been influenced by the dying embers of this movement when he visited St. Aloysius church in 1875. As was said, he was impressed by Cardinal Manning's sermon there and put photographs of him on the wall in his room with those of the Pope. However, it was likely that he was fascinated more by Newman. Wilde's son, Vyvyan Holland, says his father was attracted to Newman like a moth to a candle.[61] In addition, in 1877, to the question, "Your Favourite Character in History?", Wilde answered, "J. Newman, [King] Alexander".[62] Why was Wilde attracted to him? It is possible that one reason was his literary interest. Firstly, he led the Oxford Movement with Keble as a clergyman of the Anglican Church. Cardinal Manning was also one of the leaders of that movement, but his aim was slightly different from Newman's. In fact, while Manning's activity was mainly related to social activity, such as working amongst the poor and the workers, Newman rather regarded literary works as important. For example, he began to issue

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[58] *Letters,* pp. 20-1.
[59] Philippe Jullian, *Oscar Wilde*, translated by Violet Wyndham (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1994), p. 45.
[60] *ibid.*, pp. 33-4.
[61] Vyvyan Holland, *Son of Oscar Wilde*, p. 31.
[62] Holland, *The Wilde Album*, pp. 44-5. There is a caption for this photograph in Wilde's manuscript. "Pages from an American 'Confession Album' completed by Wilde in 1877. There is a disturbingly premonitory ring to some of the answers. Inset **The Oxford dandy in June 1875.** *(Photo Hills &*

the leaflet, *Tracts for the Times*, from 1833 and wrote some fiction and poems. It is said that some authors, such as Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89), Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874-1936), Evelyn Waugh (1903-66) and Graham Greene (1904-91) were influenced by Newman. It is easy to imagine the same for Wilde, who was also eager to write religious poems, and who admired Newman. However, this was simply a crude interpretation. The significant reason for his respecting Newman seems to lie in the latter's unique attitude towards religion.

Newman entered Oxford via Trinity College and was elected a Fellow of Oriel College in 1822. Two years later, he was ordained to the diaconate and became a curate of St. Clement's on the same day. In 1832, he resigned his posts because of a difference of opinion about tutorship between the provost of the college and himself. However, as a curate of St. Mary's church, he continued his work vigorously and attracted many students and citizens to those churches. Then he became involved in the Oxford Movement.

At that time, a radical branch of divinity called liberal Protestantism came to Britain from Europe. It pointed out some paradoxes in the Bible, and aimed for, and resulted in, fewer people believing literally in the Bible. People who tried to resist this, were Keble and other members of the Oxford Movement. They presented a new explanation of the Thirty-Nine Articles, which were part of the doctrine of the Anglican Church. It claimed that the Bible included truth in the form of an allegory which was open to different interpretations. They also insisted that the thought of Catholicism is necessary to examine and find truth in the Bible. With this new explanation, Newman also emphasised that the doctrine of the Anglican Church was not in discord with that of Catholicism. It followed a middle road between Catholicism and radical Protestantism. They insisted on attacking Parliament's plan to disestablish the Church of Ireland, which was the Anglican Church in Ireland, for tax reasons. For that purpose they made clear the essence of their religion and intended to prevent secular power from entering the spiritual world.

Perhaps their assertion was attractive enough for Wilde. However, the reference above cannot explain why Wilde was impressed by Newman especially. Newman's next stage can do so. Keble attempted to ensure the authority of the Bible

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Saunders)".

through historical research of stories in it. He believed that it brought consistency to the Bible and let people understand the Bible without confusion However, Newman seemed to begin to doubt this aim of Keble's. He was also a historian and could judge the limit of the human ability to recognise and to understand. He had doubted whether or not human beings could perceive truth which came from God. In his book,[63] referring to Bishop Joseph Butler's (1641-1723) works, he discussed the variety and transition of truth. When he takes this viewpoint, various aspects of truth emerge. Amongst these aspects, some have never existed, thus Keble's historical method for research of the episodes in the Bible cannot be available. In the process of looking for how people can have faith amongst the variety and transition of truth, he understood the concept, "the antecedent probability".[64] In that concept, he states that it is more important to see the truth through facts and beyond them. It is different from the activity of collecting knowledge in a scientific way and is the point where faith is required. According to this way of thinking, any variety has to be respected, and any development has to be permitted, because they are aspects of development of the truth. This assertion was not accepted by the authorities of the Anglican Church. The Oxford parish forbade the issue of his leaflet. He resigned his position at St. Mary's and then converted to Catholicism in 1845.

As a Catholic priest, he carried out many outstanding works. For example, he established the Oratory of St. Philip Neri near Birmingham in 1848. In addition, he established the Catholic University of Ireland in Dublin. His writings were also published, including *Apologia pro Vita sua* (1864) and *Parochial and Plain Sermons* (1868). His position can be seen particularly in his *Idea of a University: Defined and Illustrated* (1873).[65] He regarded art as art for a better religious life and defined the aim of university as education of intelligence itself which was not affected by anything. As a Catholic priest, in a book which refers to a Catholic university, he emphasised that education should be based on Catholicism. However, it is possible that his philosophy is accessible to anyone. It is not limited only to Catholic believers. His

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[63] J. H. Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (2nd ed.; London: James Toovey, 1846), pp. 113-4.
[64] J. H. Newman, *Fifteen Sermons Preached before the University of Oxford between A. D. 1826 and 1843* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), p. 203.
[65] J. H. Newman, *The Idea of a University: Defined and Illustrated* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 71-81.

ideas here are related to his attitude towards truth in variety and transition. He tried to see truth through any aspect of faith. As was said, he was a clergyman of the Anglican Church who aimed for a middle way to unite the doctrine of the Anglican Church with the Catholic elements and then was a Catholic priest. It was likely that his personal history contributed to forming his comprehensive viewpoint. To prove this, some interesting facts can be pointed out. In 1877, he was elected to an honorary fellowship of Trinity College, Oxford. As was said, that college was one of the centres of the Anglican Church. Moreover, in 1879, the Pope, Leo XIII, appointed him a cardinal. The present Pope, John Paul II, even quoted a reference to him in his sermon about the mission of Catholic universities.[66] In addition, it is said that Mother Theresa used a prayer written by Newman. These facts mean that he was appreciated in different denominations.

As was said in the previous sections, Wilde was in a quite difficult situation because of his national and religious identity. He had been tormented by the conflict between Ireland and England and had felt distress because of the conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism. Each dichotomy had a long history of conflict, and they were linked in a very complicated way. Moreover, the opinions and intentions of his parents, relatives, friends and teachers made dichotomies more complicated. In other words, he was standing at a crossroads between the extremities of Ireland and England, Catholicism and Protestantism. Therefore, I think, for Wilde, Newman's attitude clearly pointed him in a new direction of his spiritual development. It let Wilde refute dichotomization. He did not intend to join one side or the other. Nor could he attempt to find the way to go between two things which opposed each other. It was likely that he would have sought for another way which includes both extremities in various aspects. We can argue that it was deeply influenced by Newman's way of life. He regarded variety and transition as important for one's faith. Then his philosophy was admired in both Catholicism and Protestantism. When Wilde sent a letter to William Ward in 1877, he wrote the following excitedly:

> I have dreams of a visit to Newman, of the holy sacrament in a new Church, and

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[66] John Paul II, *Apostolic Constitution of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on Catholic Universities* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1990), pp. 6, 15, 20.

> of a quiet and peace afterwards in my soul.[67]

> I am going first to see Newman at Birmingham to burn my fingers a little more. [...] I am awfully keen for an interview, not of course to argue, but merely to be in the presence of that divine man.[68]

At that time, perhaps his attitude towards Newman was only the yearning of young people. However, in 1895, when he asked Robert Ross to send him books in prison, a list of fifteen books, such as *The Confessions* by St. Augustine (354-430) and *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* by Walter Pater, includes some of Newman's works. This means that his respect for Newman was not only permanent but also important. In the process of forming his attitude towards life, Newman's ideas formed a significant part of it.

Through Wilde's reference to dichotomies, his way of thinking influenced by Newman can be called pluralism.[69] I defined Wilde's pluralism as allowing the independence of each being and accepting various identities and their diversity. According to this, each individual's talent and opinions are equally respected. As a result, it places great importance on the coming-together and integration of different elements and the new elements this creates. Being Irish by birth meant that he was pre-disposed to this. The conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism raised the issue, and admiring Newman made it clearer. When he was twenty-three years old, he answered the question, "What is your *bête noir*?" as follows, "a thorough Irish Protestant".[70] It symbolises the basis of his philosophy. As was said in the former part of this chapter, with his suffering from the national and religious conflict, pluralism had gradually come to him through Newman's beliefs. It could have fulfilled his earnest desire to resolve the dichotomy between the two things. We may discern parallels to Mishima here. This theme will be investigated in the next chapter through Mishima's works.

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[67] *Letters*, p. 39.
[68] *ibid.*, p. 41.
[69] cf. Walter Truett Anderson (ed.), *The Fontana Postmodernism Reader* (London: Fontana Press, 1996), esp. pp. 92-120, 126-46.
[70] Holland, *The Wilde Album*, pp. 44-5.

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Chapter 3. Forming Mishima's Dualism: Taking Part in the Real World

Regarding Wilde's way of thinking, especially the paradoxical references in his writing, Mishima says:

> The paradoxist paints himself into a corner and completely deprives himself of any right to subterfuge by his paradoxes. This is the reason why the paradoxist is frequently the most sincere person.[1]

The aphorisms with many paradoxes in Wilde's works made it possible for Wilde cynically to attack worldly and social incidents. On the other hand, as Mishima points out above, they allowed him to examine himself objectively. At that time, he objectively understood the issues caused by his background between Ireland and England, and between Catholicism and Protestantism. This seemed to have lasted throughout his life. From this objective viewpoint, he looked for where he should go. Mishima, who was interested in Wilde's aphorisms, also intended to examine himself. After being attracted to Wilde's work, *Salomé*, and showing signs of his new development in the post-war period in *Confessions of a Mask*, how did he understand his spiritual and intellectual development? Through his works, I will investigate Mishima's awareness of worldly reality and the basis of his philosophy.

3.1. Contact with Greece (1952)

"Aporo no sakazuki" demonstrates to us Mishima's excitement at visiting Greece.[2] The references to Greece start from the description of his impression on the ship going there:

> The sun! The sun! The perfect sun!
> We have a habit of working in the night, so are anxious for the sun like those who are thirsty.[3]

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[1] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 336.
[2] Mishima, "Aporo no sakazuki", *Works* 26, p. 9.
[3] *ibid.*, p. 14.

Visiting Greece was one of the influential events which moulded the basis of Wilde's philosophy: it was also an impressive experience for Mishima. He, who usually wrote his works late in the night, refers to his excitement about going to Greece as above and continues to do so in later parts of the work. He also calls Greece "the place of my strong attachment".[4] By these references, we know how he had been looking forward to going to Greece. As a special correspondent at *the Asahi Shinbun* of Japan, via the United States, Brazil and U.K., he arrived there on 24 April 1952 and stayed until 29 April. He states his joy in many parts of this work such as when he says, "I am in Greece, I am supremely happy;"[5] and, "I love the light and wind here from my heart."[6] Firstly, he was impressed by the beautiful scenery, ancient Greek architecture and sculpture. At the Acropolis and the Parthenon, he was fascinated by the beauty of the temples. Then he deepened his understanding to appreciate the fundamental parts of the Greek spirit. For instance, he referred to the splendid sculpture of a young boy at the museum of art in Delphi. He appreciated its well-balanced beauty, composed of purity and bashfulness, and defined it as the essence of that sculpture. As was pointed out by Yoshimura Teiji,[7] it can be said that the background of his taste for Greek works of art had been prepared since his early works. For example, in *Confessions of a Mask*, when the hero admires the young loader of night-soil buckets, his well-balanced shape played an important role.[8] In addition, the hero's interest in the picture of St. Sebastian is possibly rooted in the author's taste. St. Sebastian by Guido Reni is a beautiful, pure, sturdy, young man. Of course, the analysis of the characters in fiction and that of the author should be distinguished.from each other. However, we can say that when he wrote *Confessions of a Mask*, visible beauty like the sculpture of a young boy already had a great significance for Mishima. Perhaps this potential element in his mind appeared at any moment in Greece.

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[4] *ibid.*, p. 102
[5] *loc. cit.*
[6] *ibid.*, p. 106.
[7] Yoshimura Teiji "Mishima Yukio ni okeru Girisha" [Greece within Mishima Yukio], *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kanshō*, July 1966 (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1966), p. 5.
[8] Regarding this issue, Satō Hideaki gives a detailed analysis in: "*Kamen no kokuhaku*: Shintai no ikonorojī"[*Confessions of a Mask*: Iconology of Bodies], *Kokubungaku*, July 1986 (Tokyo: Gakutōsha, 1986), p. 50.

Thinking of which of his works is the foremost source for his experience in Greece, *Shiosai* [The Sound of Waves] (1954) comes first. Its plot is based on the Greek myth of *Daphnis and Chloe*.[9] Mishima defines Utajima (Uta Island), which is the setting of this novel, as "a beautiful island with warm-hearted people away from bad effects of civilisation".[10] In this fictional setting, the beauty of the human heart and of nature are vividly described. In addition, he did not write it for a weekly or a monthly magazine, he published it as a book. This fact indicates that he hoped to show it to people in a perfect form after careful editing of the details of the plot. Therefore, what Mishima found and thought in Greece, even positive and negative effects for him may be included in this novel. It is possible to analyse how he interpreted his experiences there and how he digested them through examining *The Sound of Waves.* After his visit to Greece, Mishima did not agree to write *Omiyage Shōsetsu* which are stories set in foreign countries. I think the reason was that he did not want his novel to be interpreted in the framework of *East meets West* in which the main theme was differences between Oriental and Western culture. He possibly believed that he acquired an insight in Greece which was beyond differences between the East and the West. This issue in *The Sound of Waves* will be examined in the next section.

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[9] Mishima Yukio, "*Shioasai* no koto" [About *The Sound of Waves]*, *Works* 27, p. 310.
[10] Mishima, "*Shiosai* shippitsu no koro", *Works* 32, p. 39.

3.2. Releasing the Body: *The Sound of Waves* (1954)

The Sound of Waves was published by Shinchōsha in 1954 and received The first Shinchō Literary Award. When it was published, it was given a wide variety of reviews. Represented by the article in the weekly magazine, *Sandei Mainichi* [Sunday Mainichi], there are many studies which regard it as one of the perfect stories after World War II.[11] On the other hand, there are also many studies such as *Shūkan Asahi* [Weekly Asahi] which deal with it as only an artificial, ideal novel.[12] These various interpretations of *The Sound of Waves* can be concentrated into two points. The positive critics define this novel as a new aspect of Mishima's versatility, such as the book review in *the Asahi Shinbun.*[13] On the contrary, the negative ones criticise its divorce from reality. For example, Hattori Tatsu states that although the descriptions of nature in this novel are fine, the depictions of the characters are quite poor.[14]

However, for Mishima, was writing *The Sound of Waves* merely showing his versatility like a virtuoso exercise? Is it proper to analyse this novel as an ideal story separated from the real world? The mood of this novel is obviously unique amongst his other works because of its purity and simplicity. Thus it is not difficult to analyse the inner feelings of the characters. They are devoid of paradox or the ability to think deeply, unlike the characters in *Confessions of a Mask.* In my opinion, this is the reason why this novel has not been regarded as an important work by scholars. However, analysing this novel from the viewpoint of his spiritual transition, I think it is impossible to regard it as a mere exercise. If anything, it shows us his strong will to be involved in worldly reality. Consequently, it demonstrates a

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[11] "Shohyō" [The Book Review], *Sandei Mainichi* [Sunday Mainichi], 27 June 1954 (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1954). Apart from this article, Fukunaga Takehiko (*Tosho Shinbun*, 3 July 1954 (Tokyo: Tosho Shinbun, 1954)); Togaeri Hajime (*Chūōkōron*, September 1954 (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1954)); and Hori Hidehiko (*Shufu to seikatsu*, September 1954 (Tokyo: Shufu to Seikatsusha, 1954)) deal with this novel as a good one.

[12] *Shūkan Asahi* [Weekly Asahi], 27 June 1954 criticises this novel as an unrealistic work (Tokyo: Asahi shinbumsha, 1954). In addition, Terada Tōru writes critically about artificiality in this novel in *Nihon dokusho Shinbun*, 12 July 1954. (Tokyo: Nihon Shuppan Kyōkai, 1954).

[13] *The Asahi shinbun* [The Asahi Newspaper], 1 June 1954 (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1954).

[14] Hattori Tatsu, *Warera ni totte bi wa sonzai suru ka* [For us, Does Beauty Exist?] (Tokyo: Shinbisha, 1968).

new stage of his philosophical development from his early writings. I will investigate *The Sound of Waves* from this angle.

First of all, how the hero, Kubo Shinji, and the heroine, Miyata Hatsue, are created by the author should be analysed. Shinji has a strong body, but he is not an intelligent young man. This symbolises a very important thing. To interpret what this means, I need to examine how intelligence is dealt with in this novel. Shinji sees Hatsue at the fishing harbour in the evening. That night, he cannot sleep for thinking of her. He is afraid that "this might be what people meant by being sick",[15] because he has never been sick. In this part, we can argue that Shinji faces the function of intelligence which he seldom thinks about. Hatsue's image, which is restored in his mind as memory, comes out as if it existed in front of him. It is the function of intelligence. It shows him something that has no real existence. It can be called an illusion. We should note that Shinji is afraid that an illusion is a sickness. After the first conversation with Hatsue, a similar situation occurs again with Shinji. Intelligence brings another kind of illusion – that he cannot charm the beautiful Hatsue. Then it brings uneasiness, and uneasiness "torments"[16] his strong body like sickness. However, uneasiness, which is brought by intelligence, cannot completely spoil him. It is shown in the reference to their secret meeting. It is raining heavily, and fishing is cancelled. Shinji looks at the clock many times to confirm the time to leave his house. A storm is raging, but he is too naive to imagine that Hatsue might not go to the secret meeting-place. In fact, even when he feels uneasiness, which is brought about by intelligence, he does not amplify it beyond a certain degree, nor can he. In other words, because of his poor intelligence, he is unexpectedly free from the weight of uneasiness.

Similarly, Hatsue, who is a woman diver, is not a very intelligent woman. Her father, who is an influential person of the island, is against her friendship with Shinji because of the difference in social standing. Thus she secretly sends him letters. Her first letter is written in immature writing. However, it says that every day she prays to the gods for Shinji's safety while fishing and other people's understanding for their love. Her attitude can be called sincere and praiseworthy.

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[15] Mishima, *The Sound of Waves*, p. 13.
[16] *ibid.*, p. 33.

Shinji and Hatsue are not well educated people. However, because of it, they are not defeated by their uneasiness and can keep their purity.

It is necessary to read the next quotation carefully. It is the scene of their secret meeting at the observation tower in the rain.

> The girl took a few steps backward.... There was no way out. The sooty concrete wall touched her back.
> "Hatsue!" the boy cried.
> "Jump across the fire to me. Come on! If you'll jump across the fire to me..." The girl was breathing hard, but her voice came clearly, firmly.
> The naked boy did not hesitate an instant. He sprang from tiptoe and his body, shining in the flames, came flying at full speed into the fire. In the next instant he was directly in front of the girl. His chest lightly touched her breasts.[17]

In this part, the words, "the boy" and "the girl", are used with their names. As Nakajima Kunihiko says, these words seem to show that the author attempted to generalise Shinji and Hatsue. Thus he intended to describe them as the ideal boy and girl whom the reader would imagine.[18] However, I believe that these words are used to exaggerate their shapes and to remind the reader of their appearance. In brief, the body as the counterpoint of intelligence is presented here. I think Mishima clarifies it through the use of the words, "the boy" and "the girl". These words lead to a kind of holy ceremony of fire which is closely associated with their bodies. The axes of the body and intelligence are clearly shown here.

In this work, the word, "dream", is also used. The distinction between illusion and dream should be clarified. For example, Shinji's dream in the future is described as follows:

> And this boy's simple daydream was only to own his own engine-powered boat some day and go into the coastal-shipping business with his younger brother.
> Surrounded though he was by the vast ocean, Shinji did not especially burn with impossible dreams of great adventure across the seas.[19]

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[17] *ibid.*, p. 76.
[18] Nakajima Kunihiko, "Derufi no wakamono" [The Young Boy in Delphi], *Kokubungaku*, July 1986 (Tokyo: Gakutōsha, 1986), p. 58. In Japanese, "Shōnen" [the boy] and "Shōjo" [the girl] also mean boys and girls respectively.
[19] Mishima, *The Sound of Waves*, p. 19.

Whilst the dream means hope for one's future, there are two types of dream in this quotation. One is to "own his own engine-powered boat some day and go into the coastal- shipping business with his younger brother", and the other is the "great adventure across the seas". The former is closer to his life on the island than the latter, and he thinks he should have a dream based on his life on the island. In fact, for Shinji, the dream should be linked with his life. This is different from illusion which is apt to be divorced from worldly reality and leads to uneasiness. Moreover, in the episode where Shinji prays, a similar pattern emerges. He always prays in front of the small shrine dedicated to the gods of the sea. When he prays that he may become Hatsue's boy friend, he stops doing so. He thinks it a very selfish prayer. At that time, what he prays for is peace for the sea and for his family, and a big fishing-catch. These prayers refer to his present life on the island. In addition, Shinji tells Hatsue his dream, which is to make people's lives on the island happier through greater co-operation. His dream is based on a happy life on the island with others. He never dreams of going to an unknown place. In my opinion, it is important that these dreams, which are related to life on the island, are favourably described in the novel. It leads to the affirming of the life on the island.

Some of the characters also show similar attitudes. For example, Shinji's mother watches a butterfly, which attempts to fly a long distance to the next island in the strong counter-wind. First she thought what a stupid butterfly, but finally she realises its bravery. Then she makes up her mind to discuss with Hatsue's strict father the friendship between his daughter and her son. This butterfly never has an illusion that a ship comes by chance to carry the butterfly to the next island. It tries to fight against the infinite sea. Perhaps, by its challenge, Shinji's mother was given courage to visit Hatsue's father. It is possibly to be regarded as her aggressive attitude towards reality on the island. It can be said that, in this novel, dream is always different from illusion. Illusion is not connected with reality, but dream is based on the life on this island with the others. Dream never expects something outside the island.

In this section, the phrase, 'the life on this island', has been used. What the life on this island is will be investigated. The quotation given below is found in

the episode where the women divers compete with each other about the shape of their breasts:

> All of their breasts were tanned, and if they lacked the quality of mysterious whiteness, still less did they have the transparent skin that reveals a tracery of veins. Judging merely by the skin, there seemed to be no particular indication of any sensitivity. But beneath the sunburned skin the sun had created a lustrous, semi-transparent color like that of honey. The dark areolas of the nipples did not stand out as isolated spots of black, moist mystery, but instead shaded off gradually into this honey color.[20]

This is a description of the body as a physical issue. Generally speaking, living in the real world, the body is the most immediate worldly reality for human beings. In *The Sound of Waves*, the body is described as lacking "the quality of mysterious whiteness" and not standing out "as isolated spots of black, moist mystery". In fact, we may say that there is no space for an illusion to come into the reality shown by the body. In this episode, one woman diver worries that her breast might be a strange shape, but her young and shining body prove that her anxiety is groundless. We can argue that uneasiness caused by her illusion is driven away by the body. In addition, Shinji's mother suspects that her son has committed an indiscretion with Hatsue. However, when she sees Hatsue's pure body in this episode, she is convinced that it is only a misunderstanding. It is possible that the wonder of the young body dispels Shinji's mother's uneasiness.

In Shinji's case, a similar function of the body appears through using the symbol of the white ship. Watching the white ship sail on the sea, Shinji calls it "the unknown" and thinks as follows:

> So long as he had observed the unknown from a distance, his heart had been peaceful, but once he himself had boarded the unknown and set sail, uneasiness and despair, confusion and anguish had joined forces and borne down upon him.[21]

It is certain that the white ship symbolises Hatsue. I believe that this quotation confirms the link between intelligence and uneasiness. When one encounters "the

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[20] *ibid.*, p. 138.
[21] *ibid.*, p. 131.

unknown", intelligence creates an illusion, and it bears uneasiness and despair. Shinji gets on the big ship on the orders of Hatsue's father. Risking his life, he saves the ship from running aground in the storm. After that, watching the white ship again, he finds his views change in this way:

> "I know where that ship is bound for", he thought. "I know what sort of life they live aboard it, what sort of hardships they have. I know everything about that ship. [...] The boy felt again in his hands the weight of that lifeline he had pulled with the last ounce of his strength. With these strong hands he had certainly once actually touched that "unknown" at which he had previously stared from a great distance.[22]

Shinji conquers uneasiness, which comes from intelligence, by his body. By touching it, illusion changed into reality. As stated, the white ship symbolises Hatsue. His affection for Hatsue was at first only an illusion, but it becomes reality. Hatsue's father tells Shinji's mother that Shinji has got "get-up-and-go" and allows their marriage. We can argue that the power to change an illusion into reality is "get-up-and-go". As was said, Hatsue's pure body drives away Shinji's mother's misconception. In the cases of both Shinji and Hatsue, the power of the body is described, and the body can be regarded as the most immediate worldly reality.

At the end of the novel Shinji is convinced that his life is with this island. The life in this island with others stands in contrast to the illusion of going to foreign countries: a reality which exists here and now. Saving the ship by his physical strength is seen to mean he is joined together with the life on the island through his body. This action of his moved Hatsue's father, and he permits their marriage. Before this event, Hatsue and marriage to her were illusions for him. The final sentence of the novel, "He knew it had been his own strength that had tided him through that perilous night," seems to describe his self-confidence in the power of the body. At the same time, this is probably related to the next quotation from "Aporo no sakazuki":

> Greek people worshiped *appearance*, it was a great philosophy. Until Christianity invented *spirit*, people did not need *spirit* and lived proudly. [23]

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[22] *ibid.*, pp. 167-8.
[23] Mishima, "Aporo no sakazuki", *Works* 26, p. 107.

I think that "*spirit*" in this quotation is similar to the intelligence which has been mentioned in this section. Mishima continues his reference, saying that excessive focusing on the spirit is "revenged by appearance". It overlaps the function of intelligence that bears illusion and torments people by uneasiness. It is considered punishment for people who regard only intelligence as a significant issue. Therefore, I believe what is said in "Aporo no sakazuki" is never releasing the spirit from the body, but releasing the body from the spirit. Although different words are used – spirit and intelligence – this release can also be the theme of *The Sound of Waves*. As was mentioned, the body is the most immediate worldly reality for people. Consequently, releasing the body from the spirit or intelligence means releasing worldly reality from illusion. Then, as was said, it leads to affirmation of the real world. As for Mishima's novel, *Tōzoku*, Saeki Shōichi refers to the paradoxical taking part in worldly reality by two young people who are divorced from worldly reality and denied by worldly reality.[24] The same issue is clearly dealt with in *The Sound of Waves*.

Mishima's romanticism expects something outside the real world. Through the experience of visiting Greece, while writing *The Sound of Waves*, he seemed to change. He stopped imagining things beyond the real world and began to live in the real world. His cynical analysis of psychology also changed. He stopped assuming a challenging attitude towards worldly reality and saw it in a straightforward way. I think visiting Greece gave him the chance to make these changes. As supporting evidence, Mishima's critical essay, "Radige no shi" [Radiguet's Death] can be cited. This work was written at the same time as *The Sound of Waves*. In this critical essay, he declares that Radiguet was dead in his mind.[25] As stated in Chapter 1, Mishima admired *Le Bal du comte d'Orgel* by Raymond Radiguet in which the hero, a young boy, analyses the human nature of the other characters and had tried to use Radiguet's method of psychological analysis in his early works. However, this attempt gave rise to a cynical viewpoint in Mishima.

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[24] Saeki Shōichi, *Hyōden Mishima Yukio* [A Critical Biography of Mishima Yukio] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1978).
[25] Mishima, "Radige no shi e no jo", *Works* 27, p. 44.

Therefore, this declaration probably means that he no longer depicted events from a cynical viewpoint.

However, regarding *The Sound of Waves*, Mishima left a negative comment. It can be interpreted that he regarded this work as a failure.

> I intended to describe my *Arcadia* with many descriptions of wonderful nature. However, what I created is just a man-made world with a hint of the Palace of Trianon.[26]

This quotation informs us that he agrees with the criticism of isolation from reality in this novel. As was said, he intended the theme of this novel to be involved in the real world. Nevertheless, why does it give an impression of isolation from worldly reality? For example, following Noguchi Takehiko's criticism, it is possible to find a reason for the use of dialect.[27] In this novel, conversations are described in the grammar of standard Japanese. In addition, the descriptions here are written in literary style. Therefore, the dialect in the dialogue gives the reader a strange impression. It is understandable, therefore, that the novel should be criticised for its unnaturalness. However, writing of dialect is a problem not simply for Mishima but for all Japanese authors. Consequently, it is necessary to seek another reason why Mishima regarded this work as a failure.

Perhaps it is not so difficult to find an answer. For example, there are many scenes throughout the story where Shinji suffers from his love for Hatsue. Shinji has a strong body, a strong will to take part in worldly reality and a power to change illusion into reality. Of course, his uneasiness is not permanent but only temporary. However, it means that it is impossible for the body to drive away uneasiness completely. For the fulfilment of this purpose, I think one has to be perfectly lacking in intelligence. Therefore, the more the author describes the characters in the works without the uneasiness, the more the characters lose their spiritual depth and look stupid. A good balance between intelligence and the body is not shown in *The Sound of Waves*. In this point, perhaps many think that Mishima's excitement over Greece, comparable to intoxication had not abated yet.

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[26] Mishima, "Shōsetsuka no kyūka", *Works* 27, p. 168.
[27] Noguchi, *Mishima Yukio no sekai,* p. 143.

After visiting Greece, Mishima intended to affirm the real world. This comes out in the style of the novel, *The Sound of Waves*. However, I think that he had to go through certain steps to do it. Before going forward, he had to analyse the world in front of him and face his inner world. It should be only after doing this that he could be involved with worldly reality through the body. I believe *Kinkakuji* [The Temple of the Golden Pavilion] (1956) should be the work to investigate these points. Mishima fundamentally examined the meaning of being involved in worldly reality. In that work, the sea, which protects the life on the island in *The Sound of Waves*, is depicted very differently.

3.3. A Structure of Alienation: *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* (1956)

The Temple of the Golden Pavilion was published in the monthly magazine, *Shinchō*, from January to October 1956 and has been regarded by many readers as Mishima's masterpiece. The plot is based on the actual fire which destroyed the Temple of the Golden Pavilion in Kyoto in 1950. Many studies, notably Hirano Ken's,[28] consider this work to be one of Mishima's best works. Consequently, one may think that this work involves many issues about Mishima in various forms. This section will investigate the material from the viewpoint of dichotomies which had developed in his mind since *The Sound of Waves.* In this work, some dichotomic patterns have been pointed out such as "Action and Perception"[29] and "Beauty and Phantom".[30] In this section, a new contrast of two concepts will be set out and the role of the Golden Temple in this novel will be examined. How did Mishima understand the relationship between him and worldly reality which had had great significance for him since *The Sound of Waves*?

The time-frame of this novel is from the 1930s to 1950. The plot of *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* is narrated by the hero in the first person. As a result, we found that the hero does not have an objective viewpoint to reflect on himself. He grows up neither by age, nor by experience. For example, he says that he has not accumulated experience. He does not learn from his experience. Due to this unnatural characteristic of the hero, Nakamura Mitsuo ironically called this novel "an ideal novel [*kannen shōsetsu*] of the private life".[31] He is sorry that this unnaturalness prevents *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* from being a great work which deals with profound ideas. He regards the hero's quite subjective narration, which can be called an arbitrary decision, as describing the world in this novel. Therefore, the

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[28] Hirano Ken, Nakajima Kenzō, Abe Kōbō, "Sōsaku gappyō" [The Joint Review of Works], *Gunzō*, November 1956 (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1956), pp. 237-43.
[29] Miyoshi Yukio, *Sakuhinron no kokoromi, Miyoshi Yukio chosakushū* [An Attempt at Studies on Literary Works, The Collection of Miyoshi Yukio's Works], Vol. 5 (Tokyo: Chikumashobō, 1993).
[30] Mishima and Kobayashi, "Bi no katachi – *Kinkakuji* wo megutte", *Works Appendix,* Volume1, p. 285.
[31] Nakamura Mitsuo, "*Kinkakuji* ni tsuite" [On *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*], Shirakawa (ed.), *Hihyō to kenkyū Mishima Yukio*, p. 223.

reader is not given the objective viewpoints, such as "If ordinary people face the same issue as the hero, how do they think and react in resolving it?" In this respect, we can argue that Nakamura's comment, "This novel cannot expect pure human sympathy from the reader,"[32] is right.

On the other hand, I think the fact that this novel is narrated in the first person has a positive effect. As we saw in the previous chapter, Mishima displayed in his works a strong desire to control the world. Thus his works are often criticised for the shallowness of his characters, and the reader has found that they are like pieces in chess.[33] However, in the case of this novel, the hero, who is not in an all-seeing position, is the narrator. Because of this narration in the first person, the emotions and motives of other characters remain unknown. In fact, their true inner feelings are hidden, and the reader may find they are complex characters. Isogai Hideo says that the weird existence of the superior of the temple saves this novel.[34] It is related to this issue. In addition, the hero is depicted as a stammerer, since the author cannot make him talkative. Consequently, the plot is narrated in a simple and straightforward way, and the theme of the novel emerges clearly. Moreover, through the narrative in the first person, it is easy for the reader to see the hero's philosophy. The author struggled to create his own work within the constraints of the actual incident. Thus, I think creating the hero's philosophy demonstrates the conflict between the actual incident and the author's logic. Consequently, the reader may be aware of the tension created in Mishima's mind between the actual incident and how he depicted it in the novel. Noguchi's reference, "the key to the success [of *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*] exists in the material itself,"[35] is possibly related to this tension. In brief, although this novel is an ideal novel of the private life divorced from the external world, by using the first person narrative, the plot's progress shows the limitations placed by the actual incident on Mishima's logic and was saved from the author's excessive control as shown in his other works.

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[32] *ibid.*, p. 228.
[33] Mishima and Kobayashi, "Bi no katachi – *Kinkakuji* wo megutte", *Works Appendix,* Volume1, p. 285.
[34] Isogai Hideo,"*Kinkakuji*: Kōchi na mokei" [*The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*: An Elaborate Model], *Kokubungaku kaishaku to kanshō*, February 1976 (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1976), p. 5.
[35] Noguchi, *Mishima Yukio no sekai,* p. 167.

In the first person narrative, the hero suggests an interesting issue in the first chapter as follows:

> There were times when I thought of the Golden Temple as being like a small, delicate piece of workmanship that I could put in my hands; there were times, also, when I thought of it as a huge, monstrous cathedral that soared up endlessly into the sky. Being a young boy, I could not think of beauty as being neither small nor large, but a thing of moderation.[36]

In this quotation, two points of view of the hero are shown. One is where he sees the Golden Temple as small, and the other is where he sees it as large. What this difference symbolises by stages will be clarified later in this section.

It is certain that the hero is conscious of the gap between him and the outside world because of his stammering. For example, when he tries to frighten his friend, Uiko, as she is riding her bicycle one morning, he fails and makes her angry. At that time, she says him, "What an extraordinary thing to do. And you only a stutterer!"[37] He secretly admired her, so it may have been a mental shock for him. As a result, stammering, a speech disorder, forms a fixed idea of alienation from others in the world. This fixed idea stays with him until the end of the novel. As the next step, I think that the themes of the inside and the outside are further developed in the hero's mind. In the inside the hero stays as the inner being, and in the outside the world without him exists as the external being. It is possible that, at this point, the framework of this novel is complete.

We may now analyse the Golden Temple itself against the background of the theme of alienation. Here is the hero's understanding of the Golden Temple:

> Like a moon that hangs in the night sky, the Golden Temple had been built as a symbol of the dark ages. Therefore it was necessary for the Golden Temple of my dreams to have darkness bearing down on it from all sides. In this darkness, the beautiful, slender pillars of the building rested quietly and steadily, emitting a faint light from inside. Whatever words people might speak to the Golden Temple, it must continue to stand there silently, displaying its delicate structure to the eyes of the world and enduring the darkness that surrounded it.[38]

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[36] Mishima, *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, p. 20.
[37] *ibid.*, p. 11.
[38] *ibid.*, p. 19.

The hero is isolated from the external beings in the outside, and the Golden Temple is "silently" "enduring the darkness that surrounded it". We can argue that the state of the Golden Temple mirrors that of the hero. In fact, the Golden Temple is not the external being which alienates him but the internal being which is a part of him. During World War II, he frequently perceives that he stands with the Golden Temple and imagines being burned together in an air raid. Consequently, we may say that the figure, the inner being in the inside and the external beings in the outside is not 'the hero versus the others', but 'the hero and the Golden Temple versus the others'.

However, the war is ended. It is no longer possible for the hero to identify himself with the Golden Temple in the air raid. It signifies the new relationship developing between them. I think that the character who brings out this new relationship, is Kashiwagi. After the hero enters the University of Ōtani, Kashiwagi appears as a student in the same year. He has a clubfoot, and this physical disorder can be a cause for alienation, as in the hero's case. However, Kashiwagi does not experience a sense of alienation. On the contrary, through his unique way of thinking, he changes his clubfoot into a means to communicate with others and has relationships with women. The hero calls it "knowledge".[39] It should be noted that although Kashiwagi has a physical disability which can be a cause of alienation, he has relationships with women as external beings. I think that the hero finds that he can interact with external beings in spite of his stammer. As the former quotation shows, by the end of the war the hero ends his relationship with the Golden Temple as the inner being. Therefore, being aware of the way Kashiwagi's mind works, I believe that the hero wishes to move to the outside. It means that he tries to leave the Golden Temple on the inside.

Following Kashiwagi's way, the hero tries to have a relationship with a woman, namely to establish a relationship with a being outside himself. However, what happens?

> I tried to escape by thinking of the girl in front of me as the object of my lust. I must think of this as being life. I must think of this as the one barrier in the way of my advancing and my capturing. For, if I were to miss this chance,

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[39] *ibid.*, p. 116.

> life would not come visiting me indefinitely. The memories raced through my mind of all the countless times when my words had been blocked by stuttering and been unable to issue from my mouth. At this moment I should resolutely have opened my mouth and said something, even if it meant stuttering. Thus I could have made life my own. Kashiwagi's brutal bidding, that blunt shout of his: 'Stutter, stutter!', echoed in my ears and put me on my mettle. Finally I slipped my hand up the girl's skirt.
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> Then the Golden Temple appeared before me.[40]

The hero intends to escape from the weight of alienation, which is restraining him, by changing stammering into his means to communicate. However, the Golden Temple appears as a symbol of that inner being which is alienated, and his attempt fails. The meaning of the Golden Temple's appearance will be investigated later. The hero cannot go outside himself. As was said, his identification with the Golden Temple comes to an end by the war coming to an end. In fact, it can be said that the hero cannot go in either direction, either the inside or the outside. He maintains only his unstable position on the border where the inside and the outside adjoin each other.

Miyoshi Yukio discusses the existence of the Golden Temple as follows:

> The Golden Temple [...] appears between Mizoguchi [the name of the hero] and life as a solemn barrier. The phantom twice stands in his way to prevent him from forming a relationship with women and in this way keeps him apart from life.[41]

In another study, he also says:

> Beauty changes into an absolute curse and lets the splendid and solemn phantom appear in front of Mizoguchi, who is encouraged by his friend with the clubfoot, and tries to get in touch with life timidly, twice.[42]

Regarding this, Tanaka Miyoko states, "It is extraordinary that such a monstrous temple stands in a person's way, robs him of his field of vision and curses his whole

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[40] *ibid.*, p. 117.
[41] Miyoshi Yukio, "Haitoku no rinri" [The Ethics of Immorality], *Sakuhinron no kokoromi, Miyoshi Yukio chosakushū* [An Attempt at a Theory of Literary Works, Miyoshi Yukio's Collected Works], Vol. 5, p. 387.
[42] Miyoshi Yukio, "Bun no yukue: *Kinkakuji* saisetsu" [Tracing the Text: A Re-reading of *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*], *Kokubungaku*, December 1976 (Tokyo: Gakotōsha, 1976), p. 8.

existence."[43] Atsuta Masanobu also holds a similar opinion to Miyoshi's and Tanaka's.[44] These former studies regard the Golden Temple as a kind of obstacle which interferes with the hero when he tries to make contact with the external beings. According to these studies, the Golden Temple stands on the border between the inside and the outside. It shows the relationship between the hero and the Golden Temple.

However, when I analyse the scenes where the hero hopes to unite with the Golden Temple and he prays to it, I think that the Golden Temple has a more significant meaning than merely an obstacle. In addition, there is an episode where the hero recognises himself as the statue of the phoenix on the top of the roof of the Golden Temple. This bird cannot fly into the sky, because its feet are caught by the Golden Temple. Thinking about the meaning of this episode, I believe what is located on the border between the inside and the outside is not the Golden Temple but the hero. Therefore, the Golden Temple, which appears before the hero, intends to catch him who tries to go to the outside and make him stay on the border.

What is the meaning of these characteristics of the Golden Temple? In the context of an Oedipal analysis, Okai Takashi states, "If we regard the relationship between the hero and the Golden Temple as a metaphor, the Golden Temple does not symbolise a mother but a father."[45] Miyoshi compares two episodes to put forward this idea. One is the episode where the hero prays to the Golden Temple for having protected him and to protect him in the future. The other is where the merciful palms of his father cover his eyes so that he does not see his mother's immoral act with another man. Then Miyoshi also believes that the Golden Temple changes into his father.[46] However, regarding his friend, Tsurukawa's guess, which relates the Golden Temple to the hero's father, he thinks that that is only a partial answer.[47] It is not a complete answer. Although his father loves the Golden Temple and tells the hero of

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[43] Tanaka Miyoko, "*Kinkakuji*" [The Temple of the Golden Pavilion], Tanaka Miyoko (ed.), *Kanshō Nihon gendai bungaku* 23 *Mishima Yukio* [Interpretation of Modern Japanese Literature, Vol. 23, Mishima Yukio] (Tokyo: Kadokawashoten, 1980), p. 139.
[44] Atsuta Masanobu, "*Kinkakuji*" [The Temple of the Golden Pavilion], *Kokubungaku kaishaku to kanshō*, March 1968 (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1968), p. 64.
[45] Okai Takashi, "An'yu toshite no *Kinkakuji*" [*The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* as a Metaphor], *Kokubungaku*, July 1986 (Tokyo: Gakutōsha, 1986), p. 66.
[46] Miyoshi, "Bun no yukue: *Kinkakuji* saisetsu", *Kokubungaku*, December 1976, p. 8.
[47] Mishima, *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, p. 36.

its beauty, I think it is impossible to state that the Golden Temple is his father, based on these facts alone. What is the symbolism of the Golden Temple?

As pointed out by Miyoshi, there is an episode in which the hero prays to the Golden Temple for protecting him. Consequently, it stands in his way to the outside and protects him at the same time. In addition, there is a shocking episode in which the hero steps on the pregnant woman. In this scene, the Golden Temple is described as "glittering".[48] As quoted in this section, when the hero tries to have a relationship with a woman, it impedes it. In fact, the Golden Temple stands in his way to the outside and protects him at the same time. Then it does not permit the appearance of another mother as a pregnant woman. Moreover, it impedes the hero's having a relationship with a member of the opposite sex. It is possible that these ideas are generally those of a mother. If one regards the Golden Temple as a mother, one can accept that Tsurukawa's guess, which defines the Golden Temple as his father, is a partial answer. He is correct to guess that the Golden Temple is a parent – both father and mother are parents – but its role is closer to that of mother, and the female gender is important.

Another important episode dealing with this issue is found in the novel. This is the incident about a beautiful woman whom the hero and Tsurukawa see during the war at another temple, Nanzenji. She has a lover, but her parents are against their marriage. Her lover is a military officer called up to go to war. Before going to the front, they meet at Nanzenji to say good-bye. At that time, he is informed by her that their baby was stillborn. He is very sad and asks her to give him her mother's milk. She presses a little of it into a cup of tea, and he drinks it. By chance, the hero knows her through Kashiwagi and later tries to have a relationship with her. She shows her breast in front of him. However, "The Golden Temple once more appeared before me. Or rather, I should say that the breast was transformed into the Golden Temple."[49] We can argue that she is a mother for the baby, at the same time, she is also a mother for her lover, who is going to go to the front, by giving him her mother's milk. The breast, which symbolises her existence as a mother, "transformed into the Golden Temple" in front of the hero. Judging by this episode,

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[48] *ibid.*, p. 73.
[49] *ibid.*, p. 144.

for the hero the Golden Temple has more characteristics of a mother than of a father. In the final scene of the novel, this is significant. I will investigate it later. On the other hand, his actual mother is described in this way, "a fleshy quality remained somewhere in that face like a sediment."[50] In addition, as was said, she has an immoral encounter with her relative in the same mosquito net as the hero and his father. These facts probably exaggerate her womanly rather than her motherly aspects. For the hero, his actual mother neither stands in his way to the outside nor protects him.

In Chapter Five of the novel, after the hero's failure to become involved with a woman, he is ordered to go on night duty in the Golden Temple. That night, the storm comes.

> That is how it was. I was enwrapped in beauty, I was certainly within that beauty; yet I doubt whether I was so consummately wrapped up in the beauty as not to be supported by the will of that ferocious wind, which was endlessly gathering force. Just as Kashiwagi had commanded me: 'Stutter! Stutter!', so now I tried to spur on the wind by shouting the words with which one encourages a galloping horse: 'Stronger, stronger!' I shouted. 'Go faster! Put more strength into it!'[51]

The words, "Stronger, stronger!", shouted by the hero tell of his hope that he would like to perceive being enwrapped more strongly by the Golden Temple, because he confirms the relationship between him and the Golden Temple in the inside. In fact, it is the direction to enter the interior of the Golden Temple. The end of World War II ends the hero's identification with the Golden Temple, but it makes his hope stronger and more serious. Although it is temporary, he is completely engulfed by the Golden Temple. In fact, we can argue that the hero, who stays at the border between the inside and outside, enters the inside and loses any point of contact with the external beings in the outside. Consequently, for the hero, the dichotomy between the inside and the outside becomes extinct. I define this as the first direction for him to resolve the dichotomy.

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[50] *ibid.*, p. 55.
[51] *ibid.*, p. 125.

It is not difficult to find what the second direction is. It is to aim at the outside. Since the hero finds the temptation to go to the outside under Kashiwagi's influence, he has still been hoping to become involved with the external beings as worldly reality at the final stage of the novel. It is possibly very difficult for him to restrain it. In spite of the Golden Temple's interruptions, he tries to become involved with women. It proves the depth of his hope. Consequently, at this point, he can move in either of these two directions.

This is implicitly described in Chapter One of the novel. As was pointed out, there is a description of the hero's strange point of view. At that point the hero sees the very large Golden Temple and the very small one. In my opinion, these two sizes are related to the hero's two directions. When the Golden Temple is very large, he sees it from the inside. On the other hand, when it is very small, he sees it from the outside. We can argue that the two directions for the hero and the dichotomy between the inside and the outside are not suddenly presented to the reader. They are carefully prepared from the beginning of the novel by the author.

Between these two directions, going forward to the outside and backwards to the inside, which does the hero choose? For this very important decision, which controls his future, I believe what gives him the answer is the sea in the novel. In Chapter Seven, he returns to his hometown and beholds the sea. Confronting the waves, he thinks this part of nature is intimately linked with his existence. He is satisfied with the sea and finds through the sea a unity with the external being. In the later part of this section, why his satisfaction with the sea links with the outside will be investigated. Facing the sea, he intentionally chooses the direction leading to the outside and decides the way he will go. In this direction, how is the dichotomy between the inside and the outside resolved? At the seashore, the hero resolves, "I must set fire to the Golden Temple."[52] It means to extinguish the Golden Temple as the inner being in the inside. It is possible that it brings about the end of the dichotomy between the inside and the outside. The hero may never again be interrupted by the Golden Temple which exists as the inner being. I think this is a resolution for the dichotomy between the inside and the outside. To burn the Golden Temple, which has the role of a mother, also may hint at the possibility of

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[52] *ibid.*, p. 180.

researching the theme of killing one's mother in the Greek tragedies, but this is beyond the remit of this thesis.

In the previous part of this section, it was stated that the hero perceives unity with the external beings through the sea. What the external being and the outside are needs to be examined. Right after the end of World War II, the hero states:

> I must state what the defeat really meant to me. It was not a liberation. No, it was by no means a liberation. It was nothing else than a return to the unchanging, eternal Buddhist routine, which merged into our daily life. This routine was now firmly re-established, and continued unaltered from the day after the Surrender: the 'opening of the rules', morning tasks, gruel session, meditation, 'medicine' or the evening meal, bathing, 'opening of the pillow'. [53]

Because of the end of World War II, the hero has to live in time that is like a circle, eternally repeating itself. This is the passage of time in the outside. It contrasts with that in the inside, in which the hero perishes in the Golden Temple during the air raid. With regard to this passage of time, there is an important phrase. Seeing the landscape of young green leaves with the hero, Kashiwagi says, "Beautiful scenery is hell, isn't it?"[54] Then the hero thinks, "For now I could see that hell was indeed quivering in that quiet, casual scene that lay before me, wrapped in its fresh foliage. It seemed that hell could appear day or night, at any time, at any place, simply in response to one's thoughts or wishes."[55] In these quotations, we can interpret the nature of the outside. In the circle of time, it is certain that the young leaves will wither and die. Therefore, they eternally repeat a kind of tragedy, germinating and dying in the turning of the seasons. This repetition of finitude can be the nature of the outside. Therefore, as the hero says, "hell could appear day or night, at any time, at any place." Mishima regarded the Japanese people's sense of time as eternal repetition in his critical essay, "Shōsetsuka no kyūka",[56] which was written one year earlier than *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. This also shows us the importance of the repetition of finitude in Mishima's philosophy. It is easy to find the

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[53] *ibid.*, p. 63.
[54] *ibid.*, p. 111.
[55] *loc. cit.*
[56] Mishima, "Shōsetsuka no kyūka", *Works* 27, p. 168.

correlation between the sea and the nature of the outside. The hero visits his hometown, Yura. In this episode, the sea at Yura is described and he perceives unity with the external beings in the outside. I believe that the rise and fall of the waves symbolises the restless repetition of birth and death. As life and death repeat themselves, the waves rise and disappear and rise again. The state of the sea of Yura is that of the external being. In this episode, the hero is satisfied with this sea. It can be said that to be satisfied with this sea means he is satisfied with the external being and chooses the direction to the outside. As a result, to resolve the dichotomy between the inside and the outside, he adopts the method of getting rid of the inside.

Two tendencies are found in the hero after he decides to set fire to the Golden Temple. One can be called retroaction. The hero defines the Golden Temple, which has the meaning of mother for him, as "most deadly enemy".[57] Then he begins to recall the memories of Uiko who remains in his mind as the original example of a loving woman. He imagines "that Uiko was still alive and that she was living in seclusion in this particular place,"[58] and he is encouraged by this fancy.

> Since I had resolved to set fire to the Golden Temple, I had returned to the fresh, undefiled condition of my youth and I felt that it would now be all right for me to come across the people and the things that I had met at the beginning of my life.[59]

Then he goes back to the past through Uiko. We can find the reason why recalling the memory of Uiko leads him to the past. He thinks that if he goes back to the past, he may see her again. This idea is the start of his retroaction.

The other tendency is a strange awareness of his *other self*. For example, there is an episode where the hero sees a strange student:

> I slowed down and decided to follow the student. As I walked behind him and observed that he carried one of his shoulders a little lower than the other, I felt that his back was, in fact, my own. [...]
>
> Such things are liable to happen on a late spring afternoon, because of the brightness and the languid air. I became double and my other self imitated my

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[57] Mishima, *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion,* p. 204.
[58] *ibid.*, p. 209.
[59] *loc. cit.*

> actions in advance, thus clearly showing me the self that I should not be able to see when the time came for me to put my plan into execution. [60]

After all, this student is neither an arsonist nor the hero's other self. However, I think this strange tendency of the hero's is important, because this tendency comes again in the crucial scene. That scene is near the end of the novel, where the hero trespasses in the Golden Temple to set fire to it:

> The door was just wide enough so that one could enter the temple sideways. I soaked my body into the darkness of the Golden Temple. Then a strange face appeared before me and made me tremble with fear. As I was holding a lighted match, my face was reflected on the glass case that contained the model of the temple.[61]

The important role of the glass case, in which the hero sees his other self, has already been discussed. The small model of the Golden Temple represents the hero's viewpoint from the outside. In this quotation, he finds his other self, but it is a reflection. It is a mere phantom. However, it should be highlighted that he has maintained this tendency since the day he saw the strange student. After seeing it in the glass, where does he search for his other self?

On the night of the deed, before setting fire to it, the hero sees the Golden Temple. There is a phoenix on the top of the roof. Although it has wings, it cannot fly away from the Golden Temple, which represents the inside. As was said, this statue of the bird symbolises the hero. He is going to set fire to the Golden Temple to let this bird take off to the outside.

It is possible that the hero's action after setting the fire is the summation and culmination of all the direction he could have taken in this novel. Firstly he goes to Kukyōchō on the third floor, which is the topmost floor of the Golden Temple:

> The smoke swirled toward my back. As I coughed, I gazed at the statue of Kannon that was attributed to Keishin and at the music-playing angels painted on the ceiling. Gradually the drifting smoke filled the Choondo. I ran up the next flight of stairs and tried to open the door of the Kukyocho. The door would not open. The entrance to the third story was firmly locked.

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[60] *ibid.*, pp. 190-1.
[61] *ibid.*, p. 235.

I knocked at the door. It must have been a violent knocking, but the sound did not impinge on my ears. With all my might I knocked at the door. I felt that someone might open the door to the Kukyocho for me from the inside. What I dreamed of finding in the Kukyocho was a place to die, but since the smoke was already pursuing me I knocked impetuously at the door as though I were instead seeking a refuge. What lay on the other side of that door could only be a little room. And at that moment I poignantly dreamed that the walls of the room must be fully covered with golden foil, though I knew that in actual fact they were almost completely defoliated. I cannot explain how desperately I was longing for that radiant little room as I stood there knocking at the door. If only I could reach it, I thought, everything would be all right. If only I could reach that little golden room.

I knocked as hard as I could. My hands were not strong enough and I threw my whole body against the door. Still it would not open.

The Choondo was already filled with smoke. Beneath my feet I could hear the cracking sound of the fire. I choked in the smoke and almost lost consciousness. As I coughed, I kept on knocking. But still the door would not open.[62]

The hero goes to the little room in the Golden Temple which symbolises his mother and requires help. We can argue that Kukyōchō, which is the little room located on the third floor in the Golden Temple representing his mother, symbolises the womb. Therefore, the hero's action, trying to enter Kukyōchō, possibly signifies the ultimate descent to the past. The little rooms, which symbolise the womb, are variously described in Mishima's other works. For example, in "Kagi no kakaru heya" [A Locked Room] (1954), the little room in the mansion near Akasaka Palace is described. A person waiting for the hero in that room is not a woman but a girl wearing make-up. Children are closer to the womb than adults. In addition, a boy, who is the hero of *Gogo no eikō* [The Sailor Who Fell from Grace with the Sea] (1963), locks his room and feels certain that he is still a pure child. Both rooms are related to sexual acts between men and women in the stories. Even the womb has something to do with sexual acts.

Moreover, the description of the inside of Kukyōchō shining with gold corresponds with the beginning of *Confessions of a Mask*. In that work, the hero says that he remembers the scene of his own birth and states that the brand-new basin gleamed like gold. In both cases, the heroes exist as babies. Setting fire to the Golden Temple to get rid of the inside can be defined as an action towards the outside, but

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[62] *ibid.*, pp. 245-6.

returning to the womb in the form of the Golden Temple is possibly an action towards the inside. In fact, the two directions leading to the outside and the inside cross while the Golden Temple is being burned down.

In the previous quotation, there is a reference made by the hero, "I felt that someone might open the door to the Kukyōchō for me from the inside." We can find who is inside Kukyōchō. It is his other self who exists as a baby. However, the door neither opens, nor does his other self exist. We may say that when he fails to enter inside Kukyōchō, the direction to the inside disappears completely. The hero's returning to his womb is not carried out. Only the direction to the outside is left for him, and he starts to run to the outside of the Golden Temple "like a shot".[63]

> When at a certain moment there arose in me the clear consciousness of having been refused, I did not hesitate. I dodged the stairs. I ran down to the Hosui-in through the swirling smoke; I must have passed through the fire itself. When finally I reached the western door, I threw myself out into the open. Then I started to run like a shot, not knowing where I was going. [...]
>
> Then I noticed the pack of cigarettes in my other pocket. I took one out and started smoking. I felt like a man who settles down for a smoke after finishing a job of work. I wanted to live.[64]

The hero picks up his life, which exists as the repetition of finitude in the outside, and the novel ends.

Studying the development of Mishima's philosophy based on the analysis discussed in this section, I think two important points arise. One is the concept of life on the outside. The passage of time on the outside is like a circle, because it is composed of the eternal repetition of life and death. This concept is developed in his final novel of the tetralogy, *Hōjō no umi* [The Sea of Fertility] (1969-71).

The other is the means whereby the dichotomy between the inside and the outside is resolved. To this end, Mishima uses two methods in the novel. The first is to enter the inside. It is not necessary for anyone to touch external beings in the outside. The dichotomy becomes invisible so, for one on the inside, the dichotomy disappears. In the novel, this method is described as entering the inside of the Golden

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[63] *ibid.*, p. 246.
[64] *ibid.*, pp. 246-7.

Temple and being engulfed by it. The second method is to get rid of the inside. It is symbolised in setting fire to the Golden Temple in the novel. In the consequent works, how dichotomies should be resolved had been an important issue for Mishima.

As was said, Mishima had jumped over the important steps in *The Sound of Waves*. He did not analyse the world in front of him, but it is a necessary step for him to choose worldly reality and to go forward. In *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, these steps are researched in detail. In *Confessions of a Mask*, sexual perversion is described as a part of the hero's character and it means alienation. The same motif arises again in the disability of stammering in *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. As was said in Chapter 1, I regard Mishima as a heretic in the literary world of post-war Japan. Because of the prevalence of death during the war, and his devotion to Japanese classics, he achieved the transcendence of romanticism. This tendency of his is perhaps described in the hero of this novel. For example, the hero's dream of meeting death in action at the same time as the Golden Temple is destroyed in an act of war must be similar to Mishima's romanticism during the war. In addition, although Mishima had a tendency towards romanticism, he tried to take part in worldly reality. This attitude is probably displayed in the hero's attempt. He is fascinated by Kashiwagi's dogma and intends to become involved in worldly reality. Moreover, Mishima's inability to look squarely at worldly reality because of his own contempt is symbolised by his inability to escape from the Golden Temple's spell as the inner being.

In this novel, the Golden Temple symbolises the inner being for the hero, so what is its meaning for Mishima? What did Mishima burn in *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*? I think that in choosing the worldly reality, what he burned was his own romanticism. He intended to put a full stop to his yearning for death in war and longing for something from another world. This full stop has the same meaning as the one on intelligence or spirit which was analysed in the section on *The Sound of Waves*. Then, in my opinion, as the hero runs to the outside after setting fire to the Golden Temple, Mishima faced worldly reality. Therefore, the dichotomy between the inside and the outside can be said to be one between the spirit and the body. The resolution of the conflict is achieved by making the inside or spirit disappear.

For Mishima, the romanticism of the Golden Temple, which he burned by himself, represents the days right before and during war. Life after burning down the Golden Temple is in the post-war period, and one can see a kind of decision to live. Separating himself from illusion, releasing the body as worldly reality from the spirit, how did he live in the post-war period? This issue will be investigated in Chapter 5 with his work, *Kyōko no ie* [Kyōko's House] (1959).

Part II: Conclusion

As the quotation from Mishima's treatise on Wilde at the beginning of Chapter 3 demonstrates, Mishima believed that Wilde objectively understood himself and his position with his cynical aphorisms. Therefore, because of his aphorisms, Mishima considered Wilde sincere. Then, as Wilde had suffered from the dichotomy in his religion and nationality, Mishima also had been seeking to resolve the dichotomy, of the spirit and the body, and the wartime and the post-war period. He developed his studying of this theme from his early works via *The Sound of Waves* to *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. However, Mishima's way of thinking was dualistic and Wilde's was pluralistic. Mishima tried to eliminate one of the elements which gave rise to conflict: Wilde sought for a way which included both elements. Although both tried to resolve dichotomies, their methods were not exactly the same. Mishima found arbitrariness or unrestrainedness in Wilde's philosophy and reacted against it. The result of this was Mishima's accusation of Wilde shown at the beginning of Part II, "Amongst all sort of immeasurable pain, he did not know simple restraint."[65] The similarities, parallels and differences between Wilde's beliefs and Mishima's will be researched in their works in the next part.

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[65] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 341.

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Part III: The Destination of Art

Amongst modern Japanese writers whom Mishima met, there was Dazai Osamu (1909-48).[1] He was one of the popular novelists of the time, but Mishima made quite bitter comments in his critical essays, such as, "Whenever I see his weak writing style in his works, I always find his craftiness. He quickly insists that he deserves pity;"[2] and, "A patient who makes no effort to recover does not deserve to be called a patient in the true sense of the word."[3] I think these references clearly show us Mishima's thinking. He appreciated people's efforts to change something or to better themselves. He was a sickly youth, thus he was not conscripted into the army. However, after that he built up his health with sport and kept regular hours. The effort to change himself perhaps strengthened his character. (Though it can also be true that Mishima had a sense of an affinity to Dazai as well as hatred, because he could understand Dazai's suffering as a sickly boy.) In his treatise on Wilde, Mishima criticises Wilde's way of thinking, but he also says, "He [Wilde] had always been chased by an awareness that he could not gain satisfaction in his life."[4] This reference demonstrates that he regarded Wilde as a person with similar thinking to his own. In fact, although their ways of thinking to resolve dichotomies were different, they overlapped in some parts. How did they develop their philosophies? How did their philosophies accord with and differ from each other? In this part, I will investigate these issues through their views of art in their works. The aim is to clarify why they wrote their works.

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[1] Dazai Osamu (his real name was Tsushima Shūji) was born the sixth son of a great landowner of Aomori Prefecture in northern part of Japan. In Japanese society at that time, the firstborn son was the most important in succession. Because of this fact, he had had a feeling of gloom. Moreover, from the fact that his family exploited the peasants, he was gnawed by a sense of guilt. When he was a university student in Tokyo, he joined the Left to campaign for the poor. However, before World War II, communism was banned, and he dropped out. These incidents disappointed him a great deal, and he attempted to kill himself several times. He described his despair in his works, and it was accepted by many readers in the hopeless atmosphere in society during World War II. Then he became a drug addict and grieved that he could not gain love and trust from other people. Although his personal life settled down temporarily on his second marriage, his chronic illness, tuberculosis, became worse. At last, having left his wife and children, he committed a double suicide by throwing himself into a river with a waitress with whom he had fallen in love.

[2] Mishima, "Shōsetsuka no kyūka", *Works* 27, p. 94.

[3] *loc. cit.*

[4] Mishima, "Oskā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 341.

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Chapter 4. Pluralism as a Basic Concept for Wilde

As was said in Chapter 2, Wilde's pluralism allows the independence of each being and accepts various identities and their diversity. According to this, each individual's talent and opinions are equally respected. This was instilled deep within him and emerged in a more concrete form by contact with Newman's philosophy. In this chapter the meaning of art for him through the perspective of pluralism will be investigated.

4.1. The Independence of Beauty: Wilde's Understanding of Pater

Wilde matriculated at Oxford in 1874 and met two teachers of great significance there. One was Walter Pater (1839-94) and the other was John Ruskin (1819-1900). Both of these teachers influenced Wilde a great deal. Most studies agree on their crucial influence on Wilde's life. It is easy to find how those studies deal with Pater and Ruskin. Books such as George Woodcock's or Richard Ellmann's,[5] regard Pater and Ruskin as being poles apart in respect of personality and sense of morality. It probably leads to the view that Wilde was affected by Ruskin first of all and was moved by the social justice of which Ruskin talked. Then he was influenced by Pater and became a Hedonist. This may be a general understanding of the relationship between these two teachers and Wilde. Accordingly, the impression had been gained that Pater drew Wilde into Hedonism, along with Mahaffy, who was one of Wilde's teachers at Trinity College in Dublin. However, I think this interpretation is too superficial. Their influence was deeper and needs to be analysed in more detail. First of all, this issue will be examined with Wilde's understanding of Pater.

Amongst Pater's influences on Wilde, the most important one was through his reading of Pater's book, *The Renaissance, Studies in Art and Poetry* (1873). For example, Wilde states in *De Profundis* (1897):

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[5] George Woodcock, *The Paradox of Oscar Wilde* (London: T. V. Bourdham & Co., 1949); and Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1988).

> I remember during my first term at Oxford reading in Pater's *Renaissance* – that book which has had such a strange influence over my life – [6]

In addition, he told Yeats the following:

> 'I never travel anywhere without Pater's essay on the Renaissance, that is my golden book, but the last trumpet should have sounded the moment it was written – it is the very flower of the Decadence.'[7]

Which point of the book made such a strong impression on Wilde? *The Renaissance* is a collection of Pater's short essays. Amongst them, the longest one, which was written first, is a study on Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-68). He was a German art historian and archaeologist. He was born into a poor family, but studied classical art. After publishing his first work, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* [Reflections Concerning the Imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks] in 1755, he moved to Rome and converted to Catholicism. There, he wrote some works, such as *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* [History of the Art of Antiquity] (1764) and *Monumenti antichi inediti* [Unpublished Ancient Monuments] (1767). It is said that he raised the status of Greek art study from a mere hobby to academic research. He was regarded as a leader in this academic field and influenced much European research. For example, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) wrote a treatise on him, *Winckelmann und sein Jahrhundert* [Winckelmann and his Century] (1805), and placed great value on Winckelmann's works. In 1768, Winckelmann died unexpectedly. Tamai Akira says that he was killed by a thief on his way from Italy to Germany,[8] but the truth is not clear.

Judging from the length of this essay, Pater was very interested in him. Therefore, perhaps Wilde, Pater's student, also had had a great interest in Winckelmann's attitude towards Greek art. It includes the element of homosexuality. For instance, Wilde uses Winckelmann as a typical example of homosexuality in *The*

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[6] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1022.
[7] W. B. Yeats, *Memoirs* (London: Papermac, 1988), p. 22.
[8] Tamai Akira, "Winckelmann", Yamada (ed.), *Osukā Wairudo jiten*, p. 42.

Picture of Dorian Gray,[9] and it seems to be linked with his critical essay, "The Portrait of Mr. W. H." (1889), which refers to Shakespeare's affection for a young actor. Therefore, we can argue that Wilde sympathised with Winckelmann's attitude towards Greek art, which has an element of homosexuality, and through it, he was fascinated by Pater's work.

However, this was not the only point that impressed Wilde. Although the number of Wilde's references to Winckelmann in his works is small, some other similar points can be pointed out between them, such as the conversion to Catholicism and an interest in Greek art. Therefore, there were other reasons than only homosexuality for Wilde to be attracted by Winckelmann. This is perhaps connected to the main ideas of Pater's criticism in *The Renaissance*. It runs through the section about Winckelmann and all other parts of this work. I will clarify what the main ideas of Pater's criticism are.

In the section about Winckelmann, Pater focuses on his attitude towards art. According to Pater's analysis, Winckelmann refused to remain with only a superficial understanding of Greek art and insisted on entering deeper into the Greek spirit. He believed that it was very important to reach the point where Greek art and his spirit wove together and united with each other. He seemed to aim for an active relationship between Greek art and himself. We can say that this aim corresponded with the target of the Renaissance which sought to revive Greek art in people's actual life. This must be one of the reasons why Pater shows his appreciation of Winckelmann in his book with the comment, "He is the last fruit of the Renaissance, and explains in a striking way its motive and tendencies."[10] It was likely that such an attitude towards creating works of art and criticising works of art was attractive to Wilde. It attempts to unite different things and leads to the concept that beauty includes various things and unites them completely. Pater refers to this theme in many parts of his book as follows:

> It is because the life of Pico, thus lying down to rest in the Dominican habit, yet amid thoughts of the older gods, himself like one of those comely divinities,

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[9] Wilde, "The Picture of Dorian Gray", *Works*, p. 92.
[10] Walter Pater, *The Renaissance, Studies in Art and Poetry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. xxv.

reconciled indeed to the new religion, but still with a tenderness for the earlier life, and desirous literally to "bind the ages each to each by natural piety" – it is because this life is so perfect a parallel to the attempt made in his writings to reconcile Christianity with the ideas of paganism, that Pico, in spite of the scholastic character of those writings, is really interesting. Thus, in the *Heptaplus, or Discourse on the Seven Days of the Creation,* he endeavours to reconcile the accounts which pagan philosophy had given of the origin of the world with the account given in the books of Moses – the *Timæus* of Plato with the book of *Genesis.*[11]

Du Bellay's object is to adjust the existing French culture to the rediscovered classical culture;[12]

Like the artists who are dealt with in *The Renaissance*, the author, Pater, regarded this nature of beauty as important. For instance, in the preface of his book, he emphasised encounters between beauty and individuals through works of art.[13] Consequently, I think, for Pater beauty was not a fixed idea but a fluid one. It accepts all elements of each individual, and people feel free in it. Pater also says in the preface that it is more important for the critic to explain the influence of beauty on people than to possess a correct abstract definition of it.[14] This reference reinforces my view.

Then Pater considers beauty an existence which is dependent on nothing. This can be understood by the following quotation:

> The question he [the critic] asks is always: – In whom did the stir, the genius, the sentiment of the period find itself? Where was the receptacle of its refinement, its elevation, its taste?[15]

According to him, beauty includes all factors, such as social conditions, the spirit of the times and cultural backgrounds, and exists in a different dimension from them. This was the independence of beauty as understood by Pater.

It is likely that this concept would have been consistent with Wilde's pluralism. Through reading *The Renaissance* or attending Pater's lectures, Wilde probably had learnt to build on his thoughts about beauty. This situation is described in

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[11] *ibid.*, p. 34.
[12] *ibid.*, p. 128.
[13] *ibid.*, pp. xix-xxv.
[14] *ibid.*, pp. xx-i.
[15] *ibid.*, p. xxi

some critical essays by Wilde. For example, in "The Decay of Lying" (1889), he let Vivian, one of the protagonists, say:

> The only beautiful things, as somebody once said, are the things that do not concern us. As long as a thing is useful or necessary to us, or affects us in any way, either for pain or for pleasure, or appeals strongly to our sympathies, or is a vital part of the environment in which we live, it is outside the proper sphere of Art. To Art's subject-matter we should be more or less indifferent. We should, at any rate have no preferences, no prejudices, no partisan feeling of any kind.[16]

Beauty does not belong to people. In beauty, various elements, including people, meet each other. We can argue that Wilde had taken over Pater's concept, the independence of beauty. As was said in Chapter 2, because of his Irish background, he did not accept the dichotomy which tended to categorise people into two groups. This dichotomy leads to prejudice and conflict between those groups. Thus, for Wilde, beauty may be a concept which takes in diverse factors. In beauty, all existence is free without constraint and is united on the point of being beautiful. He describes this situation where "they can do everything they wish without hurt to the soul, and can wish for nothing that can do the soul harm" as "perfection" in "The Critic as Artist" (1890).[17]

It is clear to him that beauty was regarded as a target to aim for. According to him, in beauty, retaining independence, everything should be combined. Therefore, there must not be any prejudice or conflict caused by differences. As was said, this way of thinking shows Wilde's rejection of the dichotomy. Consequently, it was unlikely that he would divide factors into two categories such as *beauty* and *ugliness*. They should be categorised as *a beautiful thing* and *not yet a beautiful thing*. The quotation, "the contemplative life, the life that has for its aim not *doing* but *being*, and not *being* merely, but *becoming* – that is what the critical spirit can give us,"[18] from "The Critic as Artist" reinforces this analysis. I think that his categorisation, *a beautiful thing* and *not yet a beautiful thing*, indicates that every existence in the world has the possibility of being beautiful. By meeting other beauty, previously-established beauty also has an opportunity to create a new kind of beauty. Beauty should be their

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[16] Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", *Works*, p. 1077.
[17] Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", *Works*, p. 1154.
[18] *ibid.*, pp. 1138-9. This statement can be related to his call for reform of the social system in English society in the nineteenth century and to that of Mishima in Japanese society after World War II. These issues will be dealt with in the later sections of this chapter and in the following chapter.

aim. As the above quotation from "The Critic as Artist" also demonstrates, in this way, Wilde considered beauty the ideal state to be pursued.

However, perhaps he could not fully understand Pater's view when he first came into contact with it. In his thirties, he understood it in the manner above. During this period, he wrote some critical essays, such as "The Decay of Lying" and "The Critic as Artist". When he encountered Pater and his writings at Oxford, he perhaps felt freer from his Irish background. Released from the compelling force of human compassion, he focused on one aspect of Pater's opinion, namely that beauty was dependent on nothing. It seems that he understood that one could behave as one pleased without any limitations in beauty. We cannot help saying that this interpretation is very simple and easy to understand, but it is also certain that he believed this for a long time. For example, in *De Profundis* he says, "I don't regret for a single moment having lived for pleasure."[19] This reference of his can be regarded as one of the reasons for his aesthetic conduct. It is true that this Pater's book may be understood as only a recommendation of Hedonic life. The publisher of *The Renaissance* was afraid of being blamed for it. This is shown in the fact that when the second edition of *The Renaissance* was published in 1877, adhering to the publisher's request, Pater reluctantly removed its conclusion. That section carries the great danger of being read as an encouragement of Epicureanism. The cause of superficial understanding also can be seen in the preface of the book. Pater emphasises the importance of an individual encounter with beauty for people, and regards a metaphysical definition of beauty as meaningless. It is not easy to understand what Pater truly wanted to say in his book. Perhaps Wilde's understanding was only superficial. I think his dress and behaviour had been influenced by his interpretation of Pater's concept.

Although Wilde's initial understanding of Pater was shallow, deeper understanding developed later. I believe that Wilde, who was forming his pluralism through Newman's philosophy, greatly sympathised with Pater's insistence on uniting different tendencies. It is also certain that his interest in Greek art led him to read Pater's works. Beauty is independent of everything and is not swayed by any preference, prejudice or partisan view. It includes any social conditions, the spirit of

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[19] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1026.

the times and cultural backgrounds. These elements unite in beauty. This appears to be the meaning of beauty for Wilde and derived from Pater's work. As his critical essays demonstrate, from his first contact with Pater until he wrote "The Decay of Lying" and "The Critic as Artist" in 1889 and 1890, he developed a deeper understanding of this idea. Pater's concept of beauty appealed to Wilde who was developing his idea of pluralism.

4.2. The Purpose and Necessity of Art for Wilde

In the previous section, the meaning of beauty for Wilde was analysed. The next issue to be analysed is what art means to him. In "The Decay of Lying", Vivian says, "there was hardly one of the dramatists who did not recognise that the object of Art is not simple truth but complex beauty."[20] This quotation shows that Wilde considered that there was a strong relationship between art and beauty and that art was manifold in this relationship. Some other examples referring to this can be pointed out in Wilde's critical essays as follows:

> Concerning himself primarily with the impression that the work of art produces, Aristotle sets himself to analyse that impression, to investigate its source, to see how it is engendered.[21]

In this quotation, he says it is of importance to focus on the impression which appears at the meeting between people and works of art. This opinion overlaps with his stance which considers the individual encounter between people and beauty significant. Moreover, in his critical essay, "The Critic as Artist", some passages, such as, "All artistic creation is absolutely subjective;"[22] and, "Criticism [as an art] is, in fact, both creative and independent,"[23] show the same idea of art and beauty.

It is possible that this was derived from the Renaissance, with which he was familiar through visiting Greece and Pater's book. The Renaissance was the movement to re-evaluate Greek works of art and to revive its spirit from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. In the Renaissance, art activities meant evaluating beauty in previous works of art and creating new kinds of beauty in the context of those centuries. Consequently, for Wilde, criticism does not mean assessing beauty in works of art from an objective viewpoint but rather consists in the subjective creation of beauty when one appreciates existing works of art. According to these quotations from Wilde's works, we may define art roughly as deeds which represent beauty through one's experiences of encountering beauty. Artists are those who intend to represent

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[20] Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", *Works*, p. 1079.
[21] Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", *Works*, pp. 1116-7.
[22] *ibid.*, p. 1142.
[23] *ibid.*, p. 1124.

beauty, and works of art are born from artistic activity. Thus art and beauty are intimately related to each other.

If beauty and art are connected concepts, as there is no restraint in beauty, people also feel free in art. Regarding this, Mishima interestingly says in his critical essay on traditional Japanese *Kabuki* dance:

> It is wonderful and strange that the human body can feel free only depending upon the music [of the dance] which fractionates time by its rule and order, and is an unnatural invention. This shows that although the rule of the music seems to be unnatural, it will link to that of the whole of nature or the universe. This correspondence between the music and the nature of the space is the essence of dance. Without this correspondence, we are not free in the true sense and do not know the true joy of life.[24]

This reference parallels Wilde's concept above, which suggests that people feel free in art, and the following statement in "The Decay of Lying". Quoting Goethe's phrase, Wilde says:

> He [Shakespeare] forgets that when Art surrenders her imaginative medium she surrenders everything. Goethe says, somewhere: –
>
> *In der Beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister*
>
> It is in working within limits that the master reveals himself, and the limitation, the very condition of any art is style.[25]

We can argue that, even if Wilde calls the limitation brought about by art "style", both of their views agree with each other. They understand that people feel free in art, and art lets one reach beauty. Wilde thought an "imaginative medium" is very important for art for this reason. He probably thought that to perceive and to represent beauty, one should have a fine sensibility including "imaginative medium", the ability to imagine something. It can be said that this view reflected his anti-Zolaism.[26] Zolaism risks not only despising imagination as fake but also may lead to eugenics which is linked to racism. Neither of them was acceptable to Wilde.

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[24] Mishima, "Odori", *Works* 30, p. 425.
[25] Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", *Works*, p. 1079.
[26] See footnote 7 in the Introduction.

At this stage, a new question arises: what is the role of art for Wilde? To analyse Wilde's opinion on this, much evidence is found in his critical essays. For example, in "The Critic as Artist", he states:

> Recognising that the most perfect art is that which most fully mirrors man in all his infinite variety, they elaborated the criticism of language, considered in the light of the mere material of that art, to a point to which we, with our accentual system of reasonable or emotional emphasis, can barely if at all attain;[27]

This quotation is linked with the statement at the beginning of "The Decay of Lying", "It is fortunate for us, however, that Nature is so imperfect, as otherwise we should have no art at all. Art is our spirited protest, our gallant attempt to teach Nature her proper place."[28] These references indicate his view about the relationship between nature and art. He understood that nature was lacking something, and art, which dealt with beauty, complemented it with its character and function. What does it complement for nature? As was pointed out, in Wilde's idea the imagining of a beautiful state as a target was the essential element for art. Regarding imagination, there is an interesting dialogue between two characters in "The Critic as Artist":

> Ernest: I see what you mean, and there is much in it. But surely you would admit that the great poems of the early world, the primitive, anonymous collective poems, were the result of the imagination of races, rather than of the imagination of individuals?
>
> Gilbert: Not when they became poetry. Not when they received a beautiful form. For there is no art where there is no style, and no style where there is no unity, and unity is of the individual. No doubt Homer had old ballads and stories to deal with, as Shakespeare had chronicles and plays and novels from which to work, but they were merely his rough material. He took them, and shaped them into song. They become his, because he made them lovely.[29]

It says that the imagination of individuals made mere materials into art. For this process, style as the rule of art is essential. Depending on style, rough materials can be wonderful works of art. It can be said that these steps are similar to what Mishima says in his critical essay quoted above. Like dancers representing beauty with music, for

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[27] Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", *Works*, p. 1115.
[28] Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", *Works*, p. 1071.
[29] Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", *Works*, p. 1119.

instance, a painter paints his picture with some tools and his drawing technique. Then his idea becomes a beautiful work of art. In fact, art means giving beauty a form to be perceived by the observer. I believe that to show beauty to people was an important role of art for Wilde and Mishima.

In addition, Wilde states another function of art. In "The Critic as Artist", he says:

> Science is out of the reach of morals, for her eyes are fixed upon eternal truths. Art is out of the reach of morals, for her eyes are fixed upon things beautiful and immortal and ever-changing.[30]

We can argue that this reference clarifies the character of beauty in Wilde's philosophy. Perhaps he understood that beauty is immortal but always changing. In fact, beauty as a totality exists at any time. However, every separate example of beauty becomes extinct at some time. For example, anywhere in the world, flowers bloom and show their beauty, so beauty is immortal. On the other hand, after it has bloomed, without fail each flower begins to die. This situation resembles the flow of a river. Beauty exists, but it changes constantly. Wilde's paradoxical reference in the quotation demonstrates this character of beauty. It has a parallel with Mishima's understanding. As was stated in Chapter 3, he also regarded beauty as changeable. Beauty cannot remain static for a long time. Therefore, I think Wilde thought that art should record it permanently. This is another significant role of art in beauty. This idea is reinforced by some references in Wilde's critical essays such as "who is this wonderful young man, whose beauty Art has so happily preserved for us?"[31] in "The Portrait of Mr. W. H." (1889). Moreover, this role of art is connected with the story of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891).

Every beauty in nature is destined to die. In this respect, art tells a lie. Through works of art, art shows people separate examples of beauty as if they existed forever. In such a manner, art displays the immortal beauty of abstraction. I think this is the point where art complements the imperfection of nature. In "The Decay of Lying", Wilde makes Vivian deplore, "One of the chief causes that can be assigned for

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[30] *ibid.*, p. 1145.
[31] Wilde, "The Portrait of Mr. W. H.", *Works*, p. 303.

the curiously commonplace character of most of the literature of our age is undoubtedly the decay of Lying as an art, a science, and a social pleasure."[32] According to this view, when art no longer lies, it loses its mission to give beauty a form and to show it to people. Perhaps he was not able to call such works art.

In "The Truth of Masks" (1891), Wilde says, "The true dramatist, in fact, shows us life under the conditions of art, not art in the form of life."[33] This sentence points to lying or imagination as an essential element of art. It is also related to his statement in "The Critic as Artist", "Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth."[34] This quotation reminds us of the title of Mishima's work, *Confessions of a Mask*. I believe that he needed a framework of homosexuality to use as a mask to describe the gap between the hero and Japanese post-war society. This gap was also an important issue for the author, Mishima. To face it, the mask was necessary for him. Although the meaning of art for Mishima and for Wilde is different, Mishima also probably knew that imagination or lying was crucial for art to reach a higher or fundamental level. In brief, to resolve the dichotomy between the inside and the outside, he needs art. This issue will be investigated in the next chapter in detail.

Wilde believed that ideal beauty took in abstract elements such as an artist's ideas and his or her cultural background, and concrete elements such as artist's materials and environmental conditions. Then it played its part in creating works of art within artists. Therefore, works of art exhibited a supreme form of beauty. As was said, in his pluralism, Wilde admitted that everyone and everything had the possibility of becoming beautiful. Depicting beautiful moments in the world, works of art show people beauty, and art shows people what to aim for. Consequently, Wilde had Vivian say the famous phrase, "it is none the less true that Life imitates art far more than Art imitates life."[35] I analyse his views of art in this manner.

There is one point to be noted. Art is an exertion which records and shows beauty permanently, but works of art cannot survive eternally. By being burned down or damaged, they will be lost someday. Viewed from this angle, works of art are not

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[32] Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", *Works*, p. 1073.
[33] Wilde, "The Truth of Masks", *Works*, p. 1170.
[34] Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", *Works*, p. 1142.
[35] Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", *Works*, p. 1082.

everlasting. Thus, some may say that works of art are similar to other beautiful things which are born and die, like beautiful flowers. It is true that nothing can maintain its form forever. However, it is also true that compared with beautiful flowers, works of art can record beauty for a much longer time. Many works of art exist after their creators' deaths. Moreover they can be resurrected. For example, by being performed repeatedly, plays stimulate different generations. They show audiences beauty over and over again. Therefore, Wilde appreciated the Renaissance. The Renaissance helped the proper function of works of art as permanent records of beauty.

Perhaps Wilde's stance towards the Renaissance is related to how he lived his life. It may be more accurate to say that it is not his taste in art but his attitude towards life. Although the concept of beauty is metaphysical, it can be said that he neither locked it up only in the ideal world nor enjoyed thinking of it as an individual. As shown already, in "The Critic as Artist", he defines "the contemplative life" as "the life that has for its aim not *doing* but *being*, and not *being* merely, but *becoming*".[36] He states that only "the critical method" can realise "the conception of the contemplative life".[37] A critic focuses on the meeting point between beauty depicted in works of art and observers. It makes people understand beauty in what they encounter. When a critic analyses an individual encounter with beauty and, based on this, shows "some new mood of thought and feeling"[38] in critical essays, s/he can be "in his own way as creative as the artist."[39] This can also be regarded as the critic's role as artist. In other words, without critical writing, beauty remains in the ideal world and ends only with the individual operation of the senses in each person. In Wilde's philosophy, through critical writing, a critic's individual encounter with beauty and a new kind of beauty created by the encounter clearly emerge and have the power to bring out or change something.

It may be argued that this stance is similar to Mishima's. As was previously shown, Mishima tried to take part in worldly reality in post-war Japan. Neither Mishima nor Wilde considered staying in the ideal world to be the right way.

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[36] See note 18.
[37] Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", *Works*, p. 1141.
[38] *loc. cit.*
[39] *loc. cit.*

They looked on commitment to worldly reality as of great significance. In this respect, it is possible to say that their stances are similar to each other's.

However, it is also possible to point out differences between their stances. Accepting the existence of different elements in beauty, Wilde attempted to record them and to describe them as works of art. In this process, these elements would blend and bring out new significance. For Wilde, the Renaissance was probably one example of this fusion. Hellenism and the culture in a later period maintain their own elements and amalgamate into one in beauty. We may say that this was one satisfactory way for Wilde, who had an Irish background, to unite different cultures as elements in beauty.

As for Mishima's view of art, until he finished writing *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, we cannot find a state which we can call multifaceted. In his dualism, one cannot exist without invading the other. For instance, in *The Sound of Waves*, the body tries to cast aside the uneasiness brought by the spirit and to conquer the spirit. In *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, the conflict between the inner and external being is described. They symbolise the tendency of waiting for something outside worldly reality and the intention to take part in worldly reality. As we saw at the end of the novel, the inside representing the passage of time during the war was burned by the hero, and only the outside representing that of the post-war period was left. In both novels, two things which oppose each other cannot permit the other's existence.

When Mishima wrote *The Sound of Waves*, he was attracted by the beauty of Greek art. Wilde was also fascinated by it. However, after that their positions polarised. We may say that this difference between them was because of the diversity of their backgrounds. For Mishima, in the wartime period, the passage of time was much more immediate because of each individual's consciousness of the possibility of sudden death, but after the war it seemed to repeat itself endlessly. These two perceptions could not exist at the same time. For the two concepts of time to co-exist must be not only theoretically impossible but also self-deceptive. He had to choose one of them; to stay in the wartime period with his memory and illusion, or to be involved with the post-war period as worldly reality. I think that this can be found in the basis of his dualistic viewpoint.

Based on the analysis in this section, Wilde's view of art is understood as follows. For Wilde, art was necessary to record and maintain the ideal status of beauty in which all elements existed without any conflict. Accordingly, in beauty, there was no kind of prejudice and discrimination, and all issues were dealt with comprehensively. Artists showed this state in their works. Various elements were harmonised and made new kinds of beauty. Therefore, classical Greek art joined with the modern code of values in the nineteenth century. Because of this integration, Hellenism clearly appeared. This led to a new movement which can be called the new Renaissance. Similarly, in Wilde's thinking, when one came in contact with works of art, one could create a new meaning of beauty through the stimulus of works of art. This was the moment when a critic became an artist. Through art, beauty acquired long life, and by recording an ideal status of beauty, art indicated to people the target to aim for. We can argue that this is the purpose and necessity of art for Wilde.

4.3. Wilde's Attitude towards Society

Wilde appreciated the Renaissance as the movement which let classical Greek art revive in a later period. The next issue for Wilde, who stressed interactions with others, must be how he let ideal beauty appear in the actual world. In this section, this development in Wilde will be investigated.

Wilde regarded the meeting of different elements in beauty as important. It is possible that this idea is similar to that of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood set up by John Everett Millais (1827-96), Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-82) and William Holman Hunt (1827-1910). In those days, perfect beauty, which was found in Raphael's pictures in the sixteenth century, was highly regarded. However, such a concept carries the danger of becoming detached from the real world. They refused to follow this traditional way, but drew pictures of the actual world, depicting the wonders of nature. They insisted on drawing through careful observation of real nature. Thus, when they dealt with objects from the Bible, literary works and historical topics, they did not use the usual method which painted imaginary men and women. Although they drew similar elevated subjects, they made an effort to represent them as concrete events in this world. At the end of the 1850s, William Morris (1834-96) and Edward Coley Burne-Jones (1833-98) joined them, and this became the group's golden age. In this period, Wilde became interested in the movement of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. His critical art essay, "The Grosvenor Gallery" (1877), shows his concern for it. The Pre-Raphaelites did not incorporate spiritual themes from the Bible or in classics into the ideal world. They looked for the point of contact between such spiritual themes and the actual world where people lived. This view probably matched Wilde's, which regarded beauty as the target for people to aim for.

Wilde's good opinion of them was close to Ruskin's. Ruskin was born in London in 1819. His father was a wealthy sherry merchant and his mother was a pious Puritan. He was educated mainly at home. He graduated from Oxford in 1842, and in the following year, he wrote the first volume of *Modern Painters*. This critical essay is well known for its high opinion of his friend Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851) who was a water-colour landscape painter. It also demonstrates his

viewpoint which evaluates the works of art and society according to the sense of beauty. It is probably linked with his appreciation of the Pre-Raphaelites in the second volume of *Modern Painters* (1846). A series of these works contributed to establishing his status as an art critic. His approval of them is more clearly stated in his critical art essay, *Pre-Raphaelitism* (1851). Repeating his advice to young British painters at the beginning of *Modern Painters*, he speaks of the ideas of the Pre-Raphaelites. In this book, he favours the movement thus:

> Eight years ago, in the close of the first volume of "Modern Painters," I ventured to give the following advice to the young artists of England: –
>
> "They should go to nature in all singleness of heart, and walk with her laboriously and trustingly, having no other thought but how best to penetrate her meaning; rejecting nothing, selecting nothing, and scorning nothing." Advice which, whether bad or good, involved infinite labour and humiliation in the following it; and was therefore, for the most part, rejected.
>
> It has, however, at last been carried out, to the very letter, by a group of men who, for their reward, have been assailed with the most scurrilous abuse which I ever recollect seeing issue from the public press. I have, therefore, thought it due to them to contradict the directly false statements which have been made respecting their works; and to point out the kind of merit which, however deficient in some respects, those works possess beyond the possibility of dispute.[40]

It is well known that, thanks to Ruskin's support, the Pre-Raphaelites were generally accepted. We can argue that Ruskin's concept of nature is close to Wilde's concept of beauty, already analysed in this chapter. Moreover, both of them tried to link their concepts with art. In this respect, their attitude towards art was consistent with each other's. In addition, as to their evaluation of the Pre-Raphaelites, Wilde's references in his early works such as "The Grosvenor Gallery" correspond with Ruskin's. These factors show they shared a similar opinion.

Wilde met Ruskin at Oxford. At that time Ruskin was the Slade Professor of Fine Art there (1870-9).[41] In the academic year of 1874, when Wilde entered Oxford, Ruskin took charge of the lectures which dealt with art in Florence. Wilde attended these lectures. However, after they ended, Ruskin went to Venice for research

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[40] John Ruskin, *Pre-Raphaelitism* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1851), pp. v-vi.

[41] After the court case concerning the American painter, James McNeill Whistler's (1834-1903) picture (see Appendix 4), he resigned from this position. Then he returned to this post in 1883 and left in the following year.

and did not have any lectures at Oxford in the following year. After returning to Britain, he lectured on modern British art, but infrequently. Therefore, there may not have been many opportunities for Wilde to learn something at Ruskin's lectures.

If anything, Wilde seemed to be more impressed by Ruskin's activities rather than his intellect. For example, in his lecture in Philadelphia on 17 January 1882, Wilde introduced an episode about his encounter with Ruskin. According to Wilde, at that time Wilde was nineteen years old and was about to take part in some sport with some friends. Ruskin took some of them to the classroom and told them that "we should be working at something that would do good to other people, at something by which we might show that in all labour there was something noble."[42] Then they went out to the villages round Oxford and worked with Ruskin to make a road across the marshes for the village people. Because of Ruskin's sudden departure for Venice, this work was not completely finished. However, this episode shows what facet of Ruskin Wilde was interested in. It was not only his intelligence but also his philosophy of mutual co-existence.

As was said, Wilde thought about the fusion of different elements, such as Catholicism and Protestantism, and Irish and English. This is referred to as Wilde's pluralism in this thesis. It is possible to say that Ruskin's case is similar to Wilde's. As was shown by his support for the Pre-Raphaelites, Ruskin also intended to unite his ideas with actual life. For Ruskin, to hold an ideal and to practise it in a concrete fashion probably had the same value. Ruskin's statement that "the noblest art is an exact unison of the abstract value, with the imitative power, of forms and colours,"[43] in "The Stones of Venice" (1851-3) reinforces this idea. Thus, beauty should link with the world, and one should make an effort to embody beauty in the real world. Lionello Venturi discusses this issue as follows:

> Liberation from neo-classical prejudices, justification of the value of mediaeval art, through a portentous fusion of aesthetic and moral sensibility, are such merits as to compel recognition that to-day, in spite of the general oblivion,

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[42] Wilde, "Art and the Handcraftsman", *Miscellanies, FCE*, pp. 306-7.
[43] John Ruskin, E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds.), "The Stones of Venice, Volume II", *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 10 (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1904), p. 216.

> Ruskin as an art critic is more alive than ever, and that many of his positions are not superseded.[44]

In respect of pluralism, I think Ruskin was quite similar to Wilde. Therefore, Wilde was perhaps fascinated by this famous art critic and was able to develop his own philosophy through Ruskin's ideas.

Although their philosophies were similar, they were not entirely in agreement with each other. The most outstanding difference is found in their attitude towards the Renaissance. Their views were completely opposite. Wilde, who toured Greece with his tutor, Mahaffy, loved Greek art and understood that the Renaissance looked for the point of contact between Greek art and the real world in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. As was already discussed, he appreciated this aim of the Renaissance.

On the other hand, Ruskin was critical of the Renaissance. For example, in "The Stones of Venice", he wrote:

> Early Renaissance, consisting of the first corruptions introduced into the Gothic schools; Central of Roman Renaissance, which is the perfectly formed style; and Grotesque Renaissance, which is the corruption of the Renaissance itself.[45]

In another part of this work, he states:

> Greek and Roman architecture is lifeless, unprofitable, and unchristian, in that same degree our own ancient Gothic is animated, serviceable, and faithful.[46]

This stance was consistent even in his other works. For instance, he uses the word "foul" for the Renaissance in "The Seven Lamps of Architecture" (1849).[47] He continued to despise the Renaissance and to applaud Gothic art in the Middle Ages. I believe that this view was strongly related to his Puritan faith. He possibly thought that placing excessive emphasis on human beings as the centre of the universe, like the

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[44] Lionello Venturi, *History of Art Criticism*, translated by Charles Marriott (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1936), p. 189.
[45] John Ruskin, E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds.), "The Stones of Venice, Volume III", *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 11 (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1904), pp. 4-5.
[46] *ibid.*, p. 228.
[47] John Ruskin, E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds.), "The Seven Lamps of Architecture", *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 8 (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1903), pp. 97-8.

motto of the Renaissance, caused the problems of English society in the nineteenth century. It bred human arrogance and corruption. In those days, the weak, such as children and poor people, were persecuted a great deal. For example, there are records of epidemics of cholera caused by poor water-supply in places around Oxford in that century. The lack of official welfare was as serious as that of the water-supply. It caused terrible scenes of child labour.[48] In this type of society, Ruskin gave lectures at the Working Men's College from 1854 to 1858. Perhaps he could not overlook this situation as a person who lived his religion.

Then Ruskin wrote an essay about his views on English society. In 1860, this essay was printed in a new magazine, *Cornhill Magazine*, which was published by George Smith under the editorship of William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63). In those days, Thackeray was one of the most popular authors, along with Charles Dickens (1812-70). In this essay, "Unto this Last", Ruskin clarifies his social stance. He attacked the liberal economics of Adam Smith (1723-90), John Stuart Mill (1806-73) and David Ricardo (1772-1823) and criticised the prejudice which came from mammonism in English society in the nineteenth century. He says at the beginning of that essay:

> Among the delusions which at different periods have possessed themselves of the minds of large masses of the human race, perhaps the most curious – certainly the least creditable – is the modern *soi-disant* science of political economy, based on the idea that an advantageous code of social action may be determined irrespectively of the influence of social affection.[49]

This essay met with severe criticism from English society which leant towards liberalism. Because of the great amount of hostile criticism, after publishing four episodes of this essay, *Cornhill Magazine* cut off the serialisation. This fact shows us that the great gap in English society between the splendour of the upper classes and misery of the working-class was a social Achilles' heel. I think that people of the upper classes avoided facing this great gap, because it was linked to changing the foundation of their social system.

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[48] Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire: From 1750 to the Present Day* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969).
[49] John Ruskin, E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds.), "Unto this Last", *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 17 (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1905), p. 25.

It is possible that Ruskin thought that the root cause of this social climate was excessive humanism. As the Renaissance suggested putting human beings at the centre of everything, people replaced God with themselves and dismissed all sense of awe. It led people to egotism, and they did not take care of the weak. He complained of this social climate and insisted on a return to nature and the Gothic period before the Renaissance. In his critical essays, he repeats that all people are the children of God and are loved by Him. In the process of industrialisation, English society was exposed to various social problems such as the flow of population into the cities because of the emphasis on industry, the decline of farm villages, the spread of diseases and the increase in crime. This increased the gap between the wealthy and the poor, and caused prejudice amongst people.

Although Ruskin's and Wilde's views of the Renaissance were quite different, Ruskin's opinion of society may show that they were closer than is usually thought. The quotation given below is taken from Wilde's critical essay, "The Decay of Lying":

> Vivian. But Nature is so uncomfortable. Grass is hard and lumpy and damp, and full of dreadful black insects. Why, even Morris's poorest workman could make you a more comfortable seat than the whole of Nature can. Nature pales before the furniture of 'the street which from Oxford has borrowed its name,' as the poet you love so much once vilely phrased it.[50]

Wilde uses the word, "Nature", here, but its meaning is different from Ruskin's. It means leaving things as they are. In fact, Wilde detests neglecting to change something for the better. This way of thinking is clarified by the following part of this quotation. He regards "The dullard and the doctrinaire" as "the tedious people who carry out their principles to the bitter end of action, to the *reductio ad absurdum* of practice".[51] We can argue that this was close to Ruskin's stance which tried to change social conditions.

There is a tendency to believe that Ruskin's influence on Wilde is less than that of Pater. For example, Hirai Hiroshi uses many more pages to discuss Pater than

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[50] Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", *Works*, p. 1071.
[51] *ibid.*, p. 1072.

Ruskin in his book.[52] As Ellmann insists on Pater's influence on Wilde,[53] most people may think that Wilde was influenced by Ruskin and Pater, but he ultimately chose Pater's aestheticism. According to this interpretation, it may be that Wilde was enticed into aestheticism by Pater. It is not entirely wrong, but too simplistic a description of their relationship. As we saw above, the influence of Ruskin on Wilde was very deep and fundamental. It cannot be dismissed. In addition, before meeting Ruskin, Wilde was inclined towards pluralism because of his Irish background. Then the philosophy of Pater and Ruskin confirmed his pluralism and multifaceted concept of beauty. If he abandoned Ruskin's way, it was against his pluralism. If anything, he had to make an effort to embrace both of them. It seems to be more natural for his pluralism and was possible for him, because both viewpoints were pluralistic. In other words, the concepts of both his teachers, Ruskin and Pater, were combined in Wilde.

> It is Criticism that, recognising no position as final, and refusing to bind itself by the shallow shibboleths of any sect or school, creates that serene philosophic temper which loves truth for its own sake, and loves it not the less because it knows it to be unattainable.[54]

This reference in "The Critic as Artist" shows Wilde's intention to let beauty appear in the real world, and agrees with Wilde's views of Ruskin and Pater. He did not attempt to understand them from the narrow viewpoint by "sect or school". His approach was more comprehensive.

Some may point out Wilde's negative comments on Ruskin. For example, in "L' Envoi" (1882) Wilde says, "this love of art for art's sake, is the point in which we of the younger school have made a departure from the teaching of Mr. Ruskin, [...] we are no longer with him".[55] However, in the same year, in the lecture, "The English Renaissance of Art", quoting Ruskin's work, Wilde emphasised the effect of art on society. It can be said that this ambivalent reference by Wilde shows us his understanding of Ruskin from the various viewpoints. Wilde's view was inclusive and cannot be understood by the simple frame of reference of Ruskin or Pater. In my opinion, Wilde subdivided the ideas of Ruskin and Pater into separate elements and

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[52] Hirai, *Osukā Wairudo no shōgai.*
[53] Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde*, p. 95.
[54] Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", *Works*, p. 1153.
[55] Wilde, "L' Envoi", *Miscellanies, FCE*, pp. 31-2.

blended them together. Then being blended, these two teachers' ideas continued to make an impression on Wilde's life.

Wilde's pluralism was born of his Irish background and developed by Ruskin and Pater. Amongst Wilde's works, the best example of this is "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" (1891). In this critical essay, the embodiment of his views of beauty and art can be found both theoretically and more practically, where suggestions are given about possessing machinery as public property and using it to free people from mundane or dangerous work. Murakami Masami explains that Wilde's socialism was based on the Hellenic social system and sought to replace slaves with machinery.[56] It is clear that although the title of this critical essay includes the word, "Socialism", its meaning here is different from the one in current use. In particular, in Wilde's usage, it has nothing to do with the idea in Marxism-Leninism which regards socialism as the first step to communism.[57] It is true that, at first sight, the following quotation is understood as a socialistic interpretation of the present definition:

> Man will kill himself by overwork in order to secure property, and really, considering the enormous advantages that property brings, one is hardly surprised. One's regret is that society should be constructed on such a basis that man has been forced into a groove in which he cannot freely develop what is wonderful, and fascinating, and delightful in him – in which, in fact, he misses the true pleasure and joy of living.[58]

However, the reference given below, which is located close to the previous quotation, clarifies that Wilde's idea is a spiritual release of people from extreme obsession about their property.

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[56] Murakami Masami, "Shakaishugika no ningen no tamashii" [The Soul of Man Under Socialism], Yamada (ed.), *Osukā Wairudo jiten*, p. 554.

[57] In *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* Vol. II, socialism is defined as "any of various theories or social and political movements advocating or aiming at collective or governmental ownership and administration of the means of production and control of the distribution of goods." It also explains that socialism is "a stage of society that in Marxist theory is transitional between capitalism and communism and distinguished by unequal distribution of goods and payments to individuals according to their work." Philip Babcock Gove and the Merriam-Webster Editorial Staff (eds.), *Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* Vol. II (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1961), p. 2162. For further details of Victorian society, see Appendix 3.

[58] Wilde, "The Soul of Man Under Socialism", *Works*, p. 1178.

> I hardly think that any Socialist, nowadays, would seriously propose that an inspector should call every morning at each house to see that each citizen rose up and did manual labour for eight hours. [...] Of course authority and compulsion are out of the question. All association must be quite voluntary. It is only in voluntary associations that man is fine.[59]

He also states, "It is clear, then, that no Authoritarian Socialism will do."[60] His position had not moved away from pluralism.

In this critical essay, what Wilde insists on is the perfection of each person's personality. For example, interpreting Christ's words, he says as follows:

> What Jesus meant was this. He said to man, 'You have a wonderful personality. Develop it. Be yourself. Don't imagine that your perfection lies in accumulating or possessing external things. Your affection is inside of you.[61]

> What Jesus does say, is that man reaches his perfection, not through what he has, not even through what he does, but entirely through what he is.[62]

Each person lets his inherent talent come into flower. We can argue that this is beauty based on his pluralism. It is the ultimate pluralism that everyone can bring out his or her own talent and personality in every way and every field. There is neither any prejudice nor any discrimination by dichotomies. By the blossoming of one's own personality, people become themselves in the true sense. Wilde calls it "Individualism" in this essay. I believe this is one of the consequences of his logical and spiritual path of pluralism.

To enlighten the reader that a feeling of superiority because of one's private property is meaningless and that concentrating on being oneself is very important, he emphasises his unique socialism. In the critical essay, he shows this idea in this way:

> And I have no doubt that it will be so. Up to the present, man has been, to a certain extent, the slave of machinery, and there is something tragic in the fact that as soon as man had invented a machine to do his work he began to starve. This, however, is, of course, the result of our property system and our system of

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[59] *ibid.*, p. 1177.
[60] *loc. cit.*
[61] *ibid.*, p. 1180.
[62] *ibid.*, p. 1183.

competition. One man owns a machine which does the work of five hundred men. Five hundred men are, in consequence, thrown out of employment, and, having no work to do, become hungry and take to thieving. The one man secures the produce of the machine and keeps it, and has five hundred times as much as he should have, and probably, which is of much more importance, a great deal more than he really wants. Were that machine the property of all, everybody would benefit by it. It would be an immense advantage to the community. All unintellectual labour, all monotonous, dull labour, all labour that deals with dreadful things, and involves unpleasant conditions, must be done by machinery. Machinery must work for us in coal mines, and do all sanitary services, and be the stoker of steamers, and clean the streets, and run messages on wet days, and do anything that is tedious or distressing. At present machinery competes against man. Under proper conditions machinery will serve man. There is no doubt at all that this is the future of machinery; and just as trees grow while the country gentleman is asleep, so while Humanity will be amusing itself, or enjoying cultivated leisure – which, and not labour, is the aim of man – or making beautiful things, or reading beautiful things, or simply contemplating the world with admiration and delight, machinery will be doing all the necessary and unpleasant work.[63]

This is the outline of his socialism, the aim of which is to get rid of poverty from society by the development of industrial science. It also means saving poor and weak people, and releasing people from attachment to material things. As he says at the end of this essay, his socialism aims at "Individualism expressing itself through joy."[64] In addition, he states "This Individualism will be larger, fuller, lovelier than any Individualism has ever been."[65] This reminds us of the multifaceted state of beauty. In fact, we can argue that the embodiment of his view of beauty must be fulfilled in "Individualism". For instance, works of art are considered examples in which artists exercise their splendid gift. Therefore, we may say that artists, who left marvellous works of art, did so by using their talent to the utmost. It is perhaps an ideal in society.

As was said above, the theme of this critical essay of Wilde's is how to crystallise his view of beauty in actual situations, such as in each person and in society in the nineteenth century. This intention, which unites the abstract view and concrete examples, is similar to Pater's philosophy in *The Renaissance*. According to the analysis in this section, Pater was also very interested in harmonising different elements such as classic and contemporary art. In addition, Pater's opinion, which

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[63] *ibid.*, p. 1183.
[64] *ibid.*, p. 1197.
[65] *loc. cit.*

accepted various versions of beauty, agrees with Wilde's "Individualism". At the same time, in respect of blending his idea into actual society, Ruskin's influence can be found. We may say that Ruskin's trying to save and to protect the weak is similar to Wilde's socialism. Wilde's Individualism has direct links with Ruskin's philosophy. These points demonstrate that influences by both Pater and Ruskin remained firmly in his mind. Although it is said that he abandoned Ruskin's concept and chose Pater's, I believe that he never chose one of them.

The source of Wilde's position given above may be his Irish background, especially his feeling of guilt. At the beginning of "The Soul of Man Under Socialism", he points out the complicated attitude towards poverty in English society in those days:

> They try to solve the problem of poverty, for instance, by keeping the poor alive; or, in the case of a very advanced school, by amusing the poor.
> But this not a solution; it is an aggravation of the difficulty. The proper aim is to try to and reconstruct society on such a basis that poverty will be impossible. And the altruistic virtues have really prevented the carrying out of this aim. [...] so, in the present state of things in England, the people who do most harm are the people who try to do most good; [...] Charity creates a multitude of sins.[66]

In this quotation, he makes the accusation that the support by English society for the poor was merely a cheap trick and that it was far from a true solution for poverty. This observation was probably originated from his Irish background, and his feeling of guilt drove him to press for reform of the social systems in the nineteenth century. He was born in Ireland and, through his parents, knew the misery of Ireland in her relationship with England. Then he made a success of his life as an author in English society and prospered because of this. To acquire his status in English society and to maintain it, he kept away from various issues related to Ireland. Even when he criticises English society in his works, he only does so in fragmentary phrases and lines. As was shown in the quotation from Blair's book in Chapter 2, he could not help feeling guilty about it. Thus I think changing the state of English society to get rid of unfair situations was his atonement for people whom he betrayed against his will. In his pluralism, all kinds of prejudice disappeared and every person was respected as an individual. If it came

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[66] *ibid.*, p. 1174.

about, Wilde would no longer feel guilty about his success in English society, notwithstanding being Irish. Therefore, I believe that the stronger his feeling of guilt was, the more earnest were his attempts to change the social system.

It was likely that his anger at the fraud in English society and his passion for changing the social system was linked with his insistence on improving the condition of prisons after his release in 1897. When Wilde was in Reading Gaol, some boys were put in prison. They had poached rabbits and could not pay the fine. It was said that one of them was less than ten years old. In those days, the punishment for children was the same as for adults. They cried very often and called out their parents' names in prison. The Irish warder, Thomas Martin (1821-96), was sorry for them and gave biscuits to the youngest boy. However, he was found out and fired for breaking the rules. This was known as the case of the warder Martin. This warder was also obliging to other prisoners including Wilde. Wilde, who had always been indignant about conditions in the prison, sent a letter to the editor of the newspaper, *The Daily Chronicle*, in May 1897 to defend the warder.[67] In this letter, he reports terrible conditions in prison, especially child abuse. In addition, when the House of Commons agreed to debate the Prison Bill, Wilde wrote his opinion on the conditions in English prisons and sent it to the editor of *The Daily Chronicle* again in the form of the letter in 1898.[68] He identifies three fundamental problems in English prisons, namely "1.Hunger. 2. Insomnia. 3. Disease".[69] That year the Prison Act was enacted, and some abuses pointed out by Wilde were reformed. Therefore, it can be said that Wilde contributed to the improvement of this social problem about which he had written in *De Profundis*.

> The cruelty that is practised by day and night on children in English prisons is incredible, except to those that have witnessed it and are aware of the brutality of the system. [...] Ordinary cruelty is simply stupidity. It is the entire want of imagination. It is the result in our days of stereotyped systems of hard-and-fast rules, and of stupidity. [70]

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[67] This letter dated 27 May 1897, was printed in *The Daily Chronicle* on 28 May 1897 under the heading, "The Case of Warder Martin, Some Cruelties of Prison Life".
[68] This letter dated 23 March [1898], appeared in that newspaper on 24 March 1898. Its title is "Don't Read If You Want to Be Happy Today".
[69] *Letters*, p. 1045.
[70] *ibid.*, p. 848.

In this quotation, one can see Wilde's strong vocation to change the terrible conditions in prison. One also may find his will to help weak prisoners. It is possible to see a connection with Pater's conception of beauty and Ruskin's work for the poor in this attitude of Wilde's. As a person who had an Irish background, he probably sympathised with those who were unfairly oppressed by authority.

Through Pater's views on the independence of beauty, he formed his view of multifaceted beauty where various elements co-existed without any conflict. According to Wilde, each element blends there and creates many kinds of fresh beauty. Art records scenes of fusion and the birth of new kinds of beauty to preserve them for a long time. Then it permanently shows them to people, as in the works of art of the Renaissance revived in later centuries. In his view, each person can also create beauty like artists and can be beautiful. Consequently, the only category in Wilde is *beautiful things* and *not yet beautiful things*. All people can be beautiful. On this point, there should not be any prejudice. In multifaceted beauty, all types of element and all people are respected, and people aim for beauty which is shown by art.

However, conditions were not conducive to this in English society in the nineteenth century. Poor social welfare prevented people from striving towards beauty. People were not respected and society itself was far from being beautiful. I believe that, for Wilde, to change these social conditions was one of the aims of creating beauty. In this respect, Wilde was strongly influenced by Ruskin. When the environment is improved, one can create a new meaning of beauty through the stimulus of works of art. It can be connected to Ruskin's views on society, which aimed to improve society, in his work, "The Stones of Venice". Since he had written "The Soul of Man under Socialism", Wilde had become more serious about his views on society and developed his philosophy even in prison. He was indignant that because of its fraud, English society in the nineteenth century did not allow one's talents to blossom. This belief could be related to his feeling of guilt at his success in English society. We can argue that his feeling of guilt led him to Ruskin's stance, supporting the weak in English society.

As analysed, for Wilde, beauty was the sum of separate aspects of beauty. They go together to form beauty, so beauty as totality was not constant. When people interact with various objects, they find various kinds of beauty. These are encounters between each personality and objects, and they integrate together. From these encounters and integration, new kinds of beauty, which are specific for each person, is born. For example, when one sees a beautiful flower, one's perception of beauty is different from that of others. Beauty exists as the sum of all kinds of separate beauty in the ideal world. I think Wilde learned this independence of beauty from Pater.

According to Wilde, beauty had this multifaceted nature. In beauty, the diversity of separate beauty was accepted. Consequently, people had no limitations such as difference in time and space. For instance, in the Renaissance, one could respond to the spirit of classic Greek works of art beyond time and space. In this interactive scene, all people and objects should be respected as elements which create new kinds of beauty. Objects providing stimulus were sometimes from nature and at other times were other people. In brief, one is stimulated by others, this stimulus provides a trigger and creates a new meaning of beauty. For this reason, others should be respected, because without them, a new meaning of beauty is not brought out. It can be understandable, because we can find many beautiful scenes created by human relationships in the actual world. We may argue that Wilde responded to this concept because of his Irish background. He expected that it led to a society without any prejudice and discrimination.

Wilde defined art as the expressive deed of new kinds of individual beauty. It made the abstract ideas of each person into perceptible forms for others. In fact, it recorded beauty and showed it to observers. The works created by this process were called works of art. In other words, they were beauty which appeared in the actual world in permanent form. Those who created works of art were called artists. Works of art, viewed through the different perceptions of the observer, created other new kinds of beauty. Therefore, according to Wilde, art critics, who recorded the birth of new kinds of beauty from their response to works of art, were artists. He intended to play the role of the artist to bring about his ideal society. I believe that he learned this interactive attitude towards society from Ruskin.

This is the relationship between Wilde's pluralism and his two teachers at Oxford, Pater and Ruskin. I think Wilde never chose only one or the other. He chose both of them. Thanks to these teachers, his pluralism developed so that he believed each person could fulfil one's talents. At that time, art symbolised Wilde's philosophy and showed the target to aim for.

Chapter 5. Mishima's Attempts at Dissolution of his Dualism and his View of Art

In Chapter 3, the dichotomy between the spirit and the body was pointed out in Mishima's work, *The Sound of Waves*. This dichotomy was also shown as the conflict between the inner being and the external being with his novel, *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. In this work, the dichotomy was resolved by the burning of the inner being, namely the burning of the spirit in the dichotomy in *The Sound of Waves*. This form of resolution symbolised the basis of Mishima's philosophy at that time. It can be found in other works, such as his short story, "Shi wo kaku shōnen" [The Boy Who Wrote Poetry] (1956),[1] and his critical essay, "Gendai shōsetsu wa koten tariuru ka" [Can Works of Modern Fiction Become Classics?] (1957).[2] In fact, just as Wilde suffered seriously because of his position between conflicting doctrines –Irish and English, Catholicism and Protestantism– dichotomies and their resolution were important for Mishima.

In Mishima's works, parallels in their view of beauty can be found. For example, at the beginning of *Confessions of a Mask*, there is an epigraph from *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fedor M. Dostoevskii (1821-81) as follows:

> [...] *Within beauty both shores meet and all contradictions exist side by side. I'm not a cultivated man, brother, but I've thought a lot about this. Truly there are mysteries without end!* [...][3]

We may say that this epigram is related to Wilde's and Pater's concept of beauty which was stated in the previous chapter. In this novel of Mishima's, the hero is described as a homosexual, thus this epigraph can be interpreted as justifying his

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[1] This is a short story about a fifteen-year-old boy who is endowed with literary talent. He enjoys writing poetry and understands the world through reading dictionaries. One day, his friend, who is also interested in literature, pours out his troubles to the hero, namely an illicit love affair with a married woman. At that time, the hero is disappointed with love, because he finds it ordinary and unattractive. He understands that his happiness in his literary world is different from his life in the actual world. "Shi wo kaku shōnen", *Works* 9, p. 257.

[2] In this critical essay analysing some fictions by Japanese writers, Mishima discusses the dichotomy between fictions and life in this actual world. He states that sorrow caused by this dichotomy is quite important for modern fictions to become classics. Mishima Yukio, "Gendai shōsetsu wa koten tariuru ka", *Works* 27, p. 493.

[3] Mishima, *Confessions of a Mask*, the title page.

unusual sense. However, as was said, the gap between the hero and others indicates the gap between wartime and the post-war period. The author, Mishima, who lived in the pre-war period and wartime, dealt with the theme of life in the post-war period in this work. Therefore, this epigraph also shows the possibility of finding the contact point between Mishima and worldly reality in beauty in the post-war period. As far as he was an artist, who dealt with beauty, he perhaps had to face the meaning of beauty.

In the case of Mishima, although beauty is treated in his works such as *The Sound of Waves* and *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, in my opinion, art as an issue with great significance first appears in *Kyōko no ie* [Kyōko's House] (1959). Among the main characters of this novel, there is a painter, Yamagata Natsuo. Through the events surrounding this artist, I believe that Mishima clearly deals with the important issue of art. Moreover, regarding this novel, Mishima says, "The hero of *Kyōko no ie* is not the character but the period."[4] In addition, Noguchi Takehiko says, "[Mishima] took a measure of the distance between him and worldly reality by writing his works."[5] Mishima tried to judge how near or far removed he was from worldly reality by writing. Consequently, through examining this novel, his position in the post-war period will be clarified. In other words, how Mishima understood the real world in the post-war period and what effect his view of art had on his understanding of the post-war period may emerge. His view, compared with those of Wilde, will be analysed through *Kyōko no ie* in this chapter.

5.1. A Figure of Reality in Mishima: *Kyōko no ie* (1959)

Including Kyōko, there are five main characters in this work. At the beginning of the story, there is an episode where the cantilever bridge, Kachidoki-bashi, opens in front of the main characters. It stands in their way like an unexpected wall of iron. From the start, they are impeded by the barricade symbolised by this bridge and the difficult circumstances it creates. In this section, how they are involved in worldly reality will be dealt with first of all.

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[4] Mishima, "*Kyōko no ie s*oko de watashi ga kaita mono", *Works* 29, p. 360.
[5] Noguchi, *Mishima Yukio no sekai*, p. 165.

Sugimoto Seiichirō, one of the main characters, firmly believes in disintegration of this world. It is possible that his belief in disintegration of this world has great significance in this work. Seiichirō thinks of the following:

> ...Every house starts to have expensive dogs, savings replace adventurous speculations, young men talk about the amount of their retirement allowances which they will receive several decades later....like today's weather, it is full of the spring light, and the cherry blossoms are in full bloom...all of them are the obvious auspices of disintegration of this world.[6]

We can argue that this is the same as balloons exploding, blown up and swollen to excess. The fulfilment of hope and abundance like an overflowing bowl are linked with the inevitability of disintegration. Therefore, no sign of disintegration in this world probably means the surest of omens of disintegration for Seiichirō.

However, we find that this disintegration of the world is not his mere individual belief. When Kyōko, Osamu and Shunkichi go sightseeing on the island which they see from Kyōko's friend, Tamiko's villa, all of them expect different events from their daily lives. I think that by thinking, they make another world different from this one in front of them. In fact, they dream and have illusions. However, contrary to their expectations, the island reveals its mundane sights such as a showy tower with its sign of welcome, a notice showing the way to the campsite and some young people who are dressed in gaudy aloha shirts. "The sights of the island, which appear in their way, have completely spoiled the joy of imagination."[7] A similar issue can be found in Osamu's mother's dream. She had a long-cherished plan to change her unpopular clothes store into a coffee shop. However, it also disintegrates because of the trap set by a loan shark. Similarly, the joke between Osamu and Kyōko can also be interpreted in the same way. They say in fun that they will marry when they are eighty years old. Their supposition of becoming eighty years old is very precarious, because there is no guarantee that they can live until that age without serious illness or serious injury. In addition, nobody knows whether their close relationship will continue until that age. However, because of this precarious supposition, it can be a joke. In such uncertain circumstances, all that is sure is that illusions disintegrate. In

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[6] Mishima, *Kyōko no ie*, *Works* 11, pp. 34-5.
[7] *ibid.*, p. 156.

fact, we can argue that disintegration of the world is not a precarious illusion but the certain reality of the world. This takes over the concept of the outside in Chapter 3. As the rise and fall of the waves symbolises, it is composed of the repetition of birth and death, or repetition of finitude.

As was said, Wilde was conscious about the purpose of art as the permanent record of beauty. It also indicates that he was aware of this changeable world. I believe that it is close to the concept of the world in *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* and *Kyōko no ie*. Because of the natural state of this world, Wilde required art. Wilde faced this world with art. In *Kyōko no ie*, how are the characters involved in worldly reality where illusions disintegrate?

Fukai Shunkichi is a college student and an amateur boxer. He is young, but he has a solid principle. It is to think nothing, at any time. He says, "It is important to be a man without memory."[8] He also considers the human body a substantial object. In this respect, the dichotomy between the spirit and the body can be found. This theme has been continued since *The Sound of Waves*. Regarding his boxing, Seiichirō says, "brilliant action is born in a twinkle and dies in a twinkle."[9] According to this, Shunkichi's boxing comprises disintegration of innumerable actions. Moreover, at the beginning of the novel, in the episode of a fight at Tsukishima, the sea is compared to Shunkichi's rival in boxing. As was said in Chapter 3, the sea symbolises worldly reality. It can be said that, in being composed of an infinite number of disintegration, the sea and boxing are quite similar. Therefore, through boxing, he attempts to put himself in reality.

However, I cannot help saying that one question arises here. It is shown by the episode involving Shunkichi's friend, Haraguchi, who killed himself. Haraguchi seems to think if all things in this world are destined to disintegrate, any effort must be in vain. That is a nihilism which stems from fatigue. When people fall into nihilism, the meaning and the significance of all action may be lost. How does Shunkichi fight against nihilism which always accompanies disintegration? I regard this as his major problem.

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[8] *ibid.*, p. 13.
[9] *ibid.*, p. 117.

The actor, Funaki Osamu, says, "To attract others and to provide them with intoxication means to transform myself into the wind;" and, "It means the physical existence of a strong body changes into one paradox..."[10] He seems to be trying to embody disintegration of worldly reality by changing his robust body into fragile wind. For this purpose, he must surely first exist. If he does not exist, there can be no disintegration. His anxiety and thirst for a guarantee of his existence, which are described in the novel, perhaps come from this. It is clear that the stronger the body which falls into the passing wind, the more obvious disintegration is. I think this is the reason why he builds up his body in the later part of the story. This is his attitude towards looking at worldly reality. He believes, "The muscle has to be built up for its own sake."[11] We may say that as other characters in the works of Mishima's perceive, the body is his most immediate reality.

However, I have to say that there is a trap. He regards his exercise as follows:

> I think that I am gradually bailing the spirit out of the body and changing it into muscle. Finally, all spirit will be bailed out and completely changed into muscle. I will be a person who is composed of only the exterior. [...] At that time, I will exist perfectly, and uncertainty within myself will disappear entirely.[12]

To bail out the inner spirit, which bears illusion, is a description of his understanding of building up his body. We can argue that this exercise means changing illusion, such as expectation or anxiety, into muscle as the guarantee of his existence, namely into disintegration. He dreams of transforming illusion into muscle. His plan can be interpreted as follows. When he continues and finishes building up his body, he will acquire a perfect body. He will no longer merely dream of it. Then "uncertainty within myself will disappear". This is probably his plan. However, we cannot help saying that a plan, which is based on unfulfilled dreams, is itself a kind of illusion. Thus, it may not produce a fundamental solution. This is the problem which he may run into.

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[10] *ibid.*, pp. 62-3.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 76.
[12] *ibid.*, p. 96.

Yamagata Natsuo is a painter. This main character "does not expect any meaning in natural scenes".[13] This demonstrates that he never imbues objects with extra meaning. He only attempts to see things as they really are. Moreover, he also believes, "Nothing happens. This is a characteristic of his life."[14] Judging from this, Natsuo is seen as a spectator who perceives objects as fragments. In other words, he fragments things into units which do not yet have any meaning and sees them as they are. For example, generally speaking, a blue sky can symbolise a cheerful mood, and a cloudy sky represents a gloomy one. In his way, these symbols are removed from the landscapes. There is no room for illusions. Fragmentation is his way of understanding of worldly reality.

In this way, what does he intend to draw? What does he see? Regarding his looking at the landscape, there is the reference:

> When Natsuo stares at the transient landscape of the sunset, he catches the object which disappears from existence with the passage of the time. Then he saves it on the canvas. Through fragmentation, each detail has its elements of time further erased. [...] They are fragmented and reduced into the elements of colour and shape. In this way, this strange landscape of the sunset is blocked from meaningful words, music, fantasy and symbols. It becomes purely a collection of spatial elements. From this point, a picture starts to be painted. At that time, he presents the birth of a picture.[15]

It is possible that the connection between the picture and Natsuo as an artist reminds us of the one between Wilde and art. As was said in the previous chapter, according to Wilde, every existence may become beautiful, and beauty is a target for everyone to seek. Art provides permanent forms with changeable things in this world and shows people the target to aim for. In Natsuo's case, art also records fast-fading things and makes their state permanent. Their views of art can be quite similar, but I simultaneously indicate what is recorded by art is dramatically different. Art fixes beauty for Wilde, but Natsuo's eyes catch disintegration of beauty. The quotation, "each detail has its elements of time further erased," does not mean letting them live eternally, but letting them show ruin permanently. It should be noted that the subject of

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[13] *ibid.*, pp. 25-6.
[14] *ibid.*, p. 26.
[15] *ibid.*, pp. 130-1.

his picture is not sunrise but sunset. The same issue is dealt with in Mishima's critical essays such as "Wattō no *Shiteeru e no funade*" [*Embarkation for Cythera* by Watteau] (1954).[16] These facts demonstrate that this issue was significant and was a theme in some of his other works. It is probable that the estrangement between Wilde's view of art and Mishima's started from this point.

Through fragmentation, Natsuo does not see beauty as a unity of various elements. I believe that he releases landscapes from symbolism or fantasy, and the small separate elements emerge. At the same time, disintegration of the innumerable elements appears. Then, being fragmented and freed from "meaningful words", "music", "fantasy" and "symbol", eternity as an illusion is excluded from each element. For example, the object which is given the name, *forest*, provides people with the impression that it exists forever. However, through Natsuo's fragmentation, each tree as an element emerges. They repeatedly die and change. He rescues each element from illusion such as eternity, which is born from "the meaningful words" or "the symbol". At that time, this world that is filled with a great number of disintegration can appear. When he draws a picture for this purpose, he is described as follows, "He is an artist now and invites feeling of emptiness to create an artwork."[17] Moreover, when Shunkichi's mother blames Seiichirō, through silently defending him, Natsuo finds he admires that feeling of emptiness which Seiichirō likes. That feeling is brought out by everything disintegrating. Thus, it is probable that Natsuo's attitude towards facing worldly reality is found precisely in that fragmentation.

However, in the case of Natsuo, I think that great doubt also arises. It is the vagueness of being a spectator. He considers the painter someone who "recreates the balance of new pictures using the elements without generalisation, which look broken at first sight, in the landscapes."[18] When he draws paintings, he perceives that he is not part of the order of this world. Thus, Natsuo's method of understanding is fragmentation by the painter who does not exist in worldly reality. However, is this possible? Existing as he does in this world, can he stand outside worldly reality? This problem perhaps needs further investigation as well as other characters' problems.

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[16] Mishima, "Wattō *Shiteeru e no funade*", *Works* 26, p. 390. In this critical essay, Mishima wrote, "The world of rococo escapes from further downfall on the canvas only." in p. 400.
[17] Mishima, *Kyōko no ie*, *Works* 11, p. 131.
[18] *ibid.*, p. 129.

Finally, Seiichirō's way of being involved in worldly reality will be investigated. Seiichirō, who is a businessman, avoids taking action through which he may be regarded as a dangerous person and pretends to be a hopeful young man. He also comes in contact with the daughter of the vice-president of his company whilst pretending to be an ambitious young man. He faces the wall with pretence.

Seiichirō always pretends to be many types of young man other than himself, but the belief in disintegration of the world is his reality. What importance does this belief have in this work? This point will be analysed. He always says that he knows the true state of this world as disintegration. When he hears the rumour that the vice-president of his company is searching for a man to marry his daughter, he thinks that to bring about disintegration of other candidates' hopes, expectations and careers, is "a good deed".[19] In fact, he regards showing them the meaninglessness of their illusions such as hope and expectations as "a good deed". After he succeeded in marrying the vice-president's daughter, he thinks, "There is certain disintegration in the future, and before it, there is his marriage. This is right. It shows him reality more than anxiety or temptation."[20] According to this, we may say that the higher the status that is gained or the more one acquires honour, the more clearly one realises that one will lose them. As the full balloon will burst with another puff of breath, gaining social honour lets one realise vividly the crisis of disintegration. Therefore, perhaps for this reason, he tries to gain higher social status. Others cannot understand his true intention, and he is regarded as merely an ambitious man who simply works to succeed in society. However, I have to say that Seiichirō's way also includes the danger of being swallowed up by illusion. This issue will be analysed with other characters later.

As described above, in my opinion, the four main characters consider the true mark of worldly reality to be disintegration. They try to take part in it in their own ways, which are shown in the opening scene of this novel. However, it is certain that their ways have their own problems. For investigating the development of Mishima's philosophy in the post-war period, I think they are very important. I will continue this investigation in the following section.

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[19] *ibid.*, p. 69.
[20] *ibid.*, p. 181.

5.2. The Post-War Period in *Kyōko no ie* and Mishima

The novel deals with Japanese society in 1954-5. These years were categorised as part of the high-growth period which continued from the 1950s to the oil shock in 1973. In this section, the state of the Japanese post-war period dealt with in the novel will be examined. People of the post-war period consider Seiichirō, who sees disintegration as truth, an ordinary ambitious young man. Teasing Seiichirō for his belief in disintegration, Kyōko comments on others in the post-war period as follows:

> …However, if you express your belief, nobody deliberates about it seriously. If it were wartime now and if we were in the terror of an air attack, everybody would admit that you are right. […] How about these days? All things return to the idyllic times, and everybody lives peacefully. If you say that this world will end soon, who will believe you?[21]

Judging from this quotation, Kawashima Itaru's opinion, "Mishima attempted to write of danger in *Kyōko no ie*. This danger is not the idea of death, but the fear of losing the idea of death," is an excellent analysis.[22] People living in 1954-5 in this work, do not perceive disintegration as worldly reality. Amongst such people, what are the positions of the main characters? I think a symbolic description is found in the reference to the statue of Kusunoki Masashige who was a samurai general in the fourteenth century. As described in the novel, this elaborate statue with his horse lets one imagine the strong enemies whom he is about to fight. However, they have already died in the past. Seiichirō finds that Kusunoki's enemies did not exist in the post-war period and that this samurai on the angry horse has been left behind. We can argue that the image of World War II, presenting disintegration to people, has already gone. Thus, it can be said that the main characters, regarding disintegration as worldly reality, have been left behind in the post-war society like the statue of Kusunoki. Seiichirō says, "Neither Kyōko nor I intend to live in the present time,"[23] and has such self-esteem

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[21] *ibid.*, p. 34.
[22] Kawashima Itaru, "*Kyōko no ie* ni okeru Mishima Yukio" [Mishima Yukio in *Kyōko's House*], *Kokubungaku*, June 1970 (Tokyo: Gakutōsha, 1970), p. 123.
[23] Mishima, "Kyōko no ie", *Works* 11, p. 35.

that "nobody knows the meaninglessness of hope more than me".[24] These quotations demonstrate his perception. In fact, he seems to perceive that he is still living in wartime when one always felt death, namely disintegration as the mark of worldly reality.

On the other hand, other people in the post-war period cannot understand disintegration and never expect it. For instance, Seiichirō's fiancée, Fujiko, who is a daughter of the vice-president of his company, considers herself a cynical woman. When Seiichirō talks about the war as disintegration, even she misunderstands that Seiichirō expects a growing demand for his company's products because of the war.

This gap in the understanding of disintegration as worldly reality between the main characters and others is also found in other parts of this work. In the case of Osamu, the women who approach him, are described as "rich women" who "attempt to bring drama into their actual life".[25] The reason why they "attempt to bring drama into their life" is that they are weary of their quiet daily life. We may say that there is a big misunderstanding that this world does not change. Thus, one of those bored women criticises Osamu's trying to face worldly reality and advises him, "Abandon your foolish and childish belief completely, and return to reality."[26] She is not able to understand Osamu's intention to embody disintegration. In addition, when Shunkichi, his mother and Natsuo go to the riverbank, she considers Seiichirō, who "loves feeling of emptiness", "a disgusting man". Like others, she cannot understand disintegration as worldly reality, which is accompanied by "feeling of emptiness". Shunkichi "hopes to take off and to jump across the river. He is irritated with the distance between him and the opposite shore. However, when he takes a step forward, his shoe is almost buried in the soft mud at the water's edge."[27] It perhaps symbolises Shunkichi's suffering through staying with others who live in the post-war period and do not face worldly reality. Shunkichi, who seeks worldly reality, has been caught by the shore where his mother stands.

I believe that, at this stage, we can understand what the wall at the beginning of the novel means. The wall prevents them from reaching the sea, and, as

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[24] *ibid.*, p. 342.
[25] *ibid.*, p. 199.
[26] *ibid.*, p. 305.
[27] *ibid.*, p. 139.

was said, the sea symbolises worldly reality as disintegration. Consequently, the wall can be seen as a symbol of the post-war period, which has lost the perception of disintegration and does not face worldly reality. In this period, how do the main characters seek worldly reality? Perhaps this also became the major theme for Mishima, who developed his philosophy in the current from *The Confessions of a Mask* to *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. Therefore, I think the crucial stage of this work starts here.

Along with the development of the plot, Osamu's character and motives will be analysed first. As stated, he attempts to conquer the anxiety of existence through building up his body. Then he plans to face worldly reality through disintegration of his body. However, when he cannot see his body in the darkness or when there is no woman praising his body, his existence suddenly becomes uncertain. Then he is again tormented with anxiety that he may be outside worldly reality. Moreover, his plan itself includes the danger of dreaming of a muscular body. Through dreaming it, he is also apart from worldly reality. In fact, amongst anxiety and fantasy, he falls into illusion. A new character appears in front of Osamu to divert him. She is Akita Kiyomi, a loan shark. Through this character, I believe that Osamu realises that he can approach worldly reality from another angle using his body.

Kiyomi's way of conducting business is grim and ruthless, and she causes many cases of suicide, including that of all the members of several families. She finally begins to wish to die like her dead clients not because of sympathy but because of her boring job. As Osamu describes her hope as "a girlish dream",[28] it is merely an illusion. However, I regard an episode where this woman cuts Osamu's side slightly with a razor as a joke as very important. Because, through his pain and blood, he can clearly perceive his body as a physical object in the world. At the same time, he can confirm it not through building up his body but through his pain. Moreover, it is possible that injuring himself brings about death as disintegration. As discussed, if he does not exist, disintegration does not happen. In fact, this bloody death as disintegration by injury means the guarantee of existence. He may be able to avoid being swallowed up by illusion and embody disintegration as a concrete example of

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[28] *ibid.*, p. 120.

worldly reality. In addition, as Nibuya Takashi points out,[29] the blood, which runs from the inside to the outside, "bails"[30] the inner illusion out of the body. Illusion as the inner being comes out of the body and connects with his muscle as the external being. It also can be argued that, at this moment, he can accord with worldly reality. Kiyomi probably brings out two things in him. One is the blood to link the inner being with the external being; the other is the guarantee of existence and disintegration through being seen and being injured. These two things let Osamu embody worldly reality through his death. When Kyōko hears this story from Osamu, she remembers the days right after World War II when she "cannot think of tomorrow".[31] It can be corroboration that Osamu's way will be able to embody disintegration as worldly reality.

Osamu, who tries to face worldly reality with the body, finds the way to get rid of illusion by the running blood and acquire the guarantee of existence and disintegration. However, one question is still left. Is there any possibility that death itself becomes illusion? I believe that this issue remains.

Secondly, Natsuo's case will be investigated. It has already been stated that Natsuo fragments landscapes to represent worldly reality. However, as was said above, it is doubtful whether he can be a spectator of this fragmentation, although he lives in this world. Perhaps this question brings out a more fundamental problem. It is stated in the episode where Natsuo goes to the sea of trees at the foot of Mt. Fuji. The sea of trees includes various separate trees and is composed of the birth and death of each element. We can argue that this situation resembles that of the sea, particularly the parallel to the rise and fall of each wave. In fact, as its similar name indicates, the sea of trees represents worldly reality as disintegration, like the sea. When he sees the sea of trees, the crucial incident for Natsuo takes place:

> Natsuo shudders with terror.
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> The vast sea of trees is blurring at its margins as if the charcoal sketch is being erased with breadcrumbs. The silhouettes of each tree are disappearing, and there is only a cluster of level green. Then even this green cluster becomes

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[29] Nibuya Takashi, "Tsuki to suisen" [The Moon and the Daffodil], Satō Hideaki (ed.), *Kenkyū shiryō shinshū* 30: *Mishima Yukio* [New Series of Studies, Vol. 30: Mishima Yukio] (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1991).
[30] See Quotation 12. Osamu regards his building up the body as the work to bail the inner spirit out of the body and to change it into muscle.
[31] Mishima, "Kyōko no ie", *Works* 11, p. 367.

> unclear, and loses the colour from the periphery. [...] The elements, which could be perceived as clear objects until a while ago, are receding into the invisible area. When the final misty part fades away, the sea of trees goes completely. After that, the ground, which should appear, does not emerge. There is nothing.[32]

The sea of trees disappeared from his vision, and he can see nothing where it once existed. I think this inscrutable incident exposes the falsehood of Natsuo's fragmentation for drawing. In other words, the impossibility of drawing worldly reality by fragmentation to exclude illusion is revealed. Why is it falsehood? Why is it impossible? Two reasons can be indicated for these questions.

One is the limitation of fragmentation, and the other is that of drawing. When one fragments objects, it is impossible to do it perfectly. We cannot break down all objects into modules or atoms in our daily life. Moreover, a smaller unit than an atom may be found in the future. In fact, all a human being can do is to perceive objects using combined molecules such as a leaf or a trunk. As for drawing, it can be analysed similarly. No matter how one tries to draw objects in detail, a human being cannot draw objects broken down into molecules or atoms as their composing units and cannot colour those units in different colours. A human being can only describe them in a mass such as branches or petals. Therefore, separate disintegration, which Natsuo assumes he can perceive, is not exactly separate disintegration. It is restricted within the limit of the bundle as a unit. Then the separate disintegration of each element cannot be perceived and is represented using the bundle as a unit.

In my opinion, the disappearance of the sea of trees, which includes numerous disintegrations, demonstrates this. Although Natsuo intends to draw various kinds of separate disintegration in the sea of trees through fragmentation, he unconsciously deals with them together as the sea of trees. Thus each tree, which constitutes the sea of trees, and each element such as nerves or chlorophyll, which constitutes the trees, are ignored by him. Then separate disintegration, which repeats itself in each tree or each element, cannot be drawn. It is clear that perfect fragmentation is impossible, and the drawing of innumerable disintegrations as worldly reality is also inconceivable. I think the final sentence of the quotation, "There is nothing," is critical for him. Natsuo's fragmentation in the drawing lets the separate

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[32] *ibid.*, p. 331.

disintegration composing the sea of trees disappear. Although he thought that he had drawn worldly reality, as the phrase, "There is nothing," shows, he has drawn nothing.

Referring to this disappearance of the sea of trees, Torii Kunio says:

> The outside world, which has its order, is expected to be fragmented by Natsuo, but it fragments itself.[33]

It is difficult for me to accept this interpretation. As Torii says, if the sea of trees fragments itself, it advances Natsuo's drawing by one step. Consequently, separate disintegration ought to appear more clearly. However, what happens to Natsuo is quite the opposite. It never appears more clearly but disappears. In this quotation, the change in the sea of trees is not fragmentation but disappearance. It is probably a warning from nature to Natsuo. He does not perceive disintegration but lets it disappear. Moreover, he has not realised what he has done to worldly reality. It is possible that the vacuum after the disappearance makes him discover the futility of his efforts to draw worldly reality. The disappearance of the sea of trees is the incident which reveals the error of his fragmentation for drawing. He attempts to exclude illusion from objects in his pictures through fragmenting them. However, we can argue that this idea itself is a mere illusion based on his misunderstanding. What should he aim for? This question is left for him to answer.

Thirdly, Shunkichi will be analysed. He refuses to think and denies illusion which comes from intelligence. He seeks worldly reality which flickers in action such as boxing. However, as was said, he has to fight against the nihilism which accompanies disintegration. If all things end in disintegration, all action loses its meaning. Through the quotations, "people, who have tasted fatigue, prefer to think that although someone gains from these properties of the Japanese economy, nothing changes for them;"[34] and, "Being separated from the dark crowd, only Shunkichi and his enemy are moving on the shiny ring. He is chosen, it is certain,"[35] two points of his understanding can be clarified. One is the state of people in the post-war period who do not intend to face worldly reality, and the other is the sense that he is different from

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[33] Torii Kunio, "Kyōko no ie", *Kokubungaku*, May 1970, Zōkangō [Special Edition] (Tokyo: Gakutōsha, 1970.), p. 70.
[34] Mishima, "Kyōko no ie", *Works* 11, p. 400.
[35] *ibid.*, p. 401.

such people. We may say that this is Shunkichi's way of avoiding being swallowed up by nihilism. However, after examining Natsuo, it is certain that this runs the risk of becoming an illusion just as Natsuo's fragmentation is.

In the case of Shunkichi, a big turning point comes when he goes into the garden to pick up some leaves from a Japanese pepper tree. Shunkichi is shocked by the labiates and Japanese peppers. In fact, the labiates and Japanese peppers "quietly waiting to be picked",[36] can be understood as accepting their death as a fact and embodying disintegration. That is to say, there is worldly reality not in the far distance but in daily life in the post-war period. Shunkichi seems to realise it and become almost mad. I think that he finds on reflection that daily life in the post-war period also changes, and the post-war period is only one of the historical scenes which disintegrate.

He regards the boxing-ring as a special place which is different from other things in the post-war period. Boxing is the way to embody worldly reality for him. However, after the episode in the garden of his house, we find that the situation has changed. For example, when he takes part in the race to eat Chinese noodles with his friend, he finds that the moving of the hands on the stopwatch in front of them is quite similar to the voice of the referee of the boxing-match who is counting. Then he suddenly stops eating. He probably finds that boxing, composed of disintegrations, is the same as eating Chinese noodles. It can be said that if they are equal, there is no longer a special meaning in being a boxer. No matter if he is not a boxer, he can correspond sufficiently with worldly reality. At that time, Shunkichi begins to think of how he lives in the slow passage of time with "slow death"[37] and finds sudden fear. In fact, we can argue that he stops boxing and starts thinking which brings out illusion. After this incident, saying that he stakes his life on what he does not believe in, he joins a right-wing political group. Perhaps it shows that he still tries to avoid illusion caused by thinking. Instead of having illusion, he attempts to perform actual actions with members of the right-wing. However, a new national polity, which they assert, is a mere illusion. As a result, his intention unconsciously aims for illusion as a goal. He has been left with this problem.

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[36] *loc. cit.*
[37] *ibid.*, pp. 441-2.

Finally, Seiichirō will be examined. He is transferred to the branch in New York. This is an exceptionally fast track in his company, and he goes there with his bride. Seeing the landscape of that city, he is convinced that the most prosperous place is closest to disintegration. Those days were the golden years for New York. Old buildings were destroyed, and new ones built immediately. Thus, he sees an accurate version of worldly reality in that city which always repeats birth and death. When his wife says to him, "That is a carriage and pair;" he answers, "It is only a hallucination."[38] I believe that his answer reflects his belief about New York. In fact, all he can see is the mere illusion fading away. He is assured that all things will disintegrate before long. This assurance seems to be close to his self-analysis. Although ordinary people do not perceive disintegration as worldly reality, he can understand it. At the basis of this analysis, perhaps there is the idea that he is a special person with exceptional powers of perception. It is clear that this idea includes the danger of illusion as well as in other main characters such as Osamu, Natsuo and Shunkichi. However, we can argue that Seiichirō's case is different from theirs. It can be found in Seiichirō's words, "An abyss, the inferno, a tragedy and a catastrophe are only romantic misunderstandings of youth. The only truth is the general and universal disintegration to come."[39] It is possible that Seiichirō, who rejects "An abyss, the inferno, a tragedy and a catastrophe" as illusions, knows worldly reality already. Consequently, he is not surprised at seeing it and does not fall into illusion as a reaction against it.

However, it must be said that there is a trap even for Seiichirō. When his wife compares his achievements with her father's social success and complains to him, Seiichirō is angry. It probably demonstrates his unstable state. He has been pretending to be one of those who live in the post-war period and do not face disintegration as worldly reality. That is to say, he pretends to be a member of the post-war period, but this pretence perhaps erodes his true character. Thus, he becomes more nervous about his social success. There is another episode in which his wife confesses having an affair with a man whose name is Frank during Seiichirō's business trip. In this part, invasion by the disguise can be found clearly. Seiichirō knows the homosexual

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[38] *ibid.*, p. 494.
[39] *ibid.*, p. 512.

relationship between Frank and another person whose name is Jimmy. Although he realises that his wife's confession is a lie, he does not reveal it in order to avoid arousing her displeasure and destroying his success. It can be said that it is a means of evading disintegration. In addition, he thinks that "he has to survive until the day of the great destruction". This shows that that day is in the far future and that this world will not change until that day. Contrary to his belief, I believe that he falls into illusion. As was said, for Seiichirō, his success as a businessman is only a means to realise disintegration clearly as worldly reality. The more he succeeds in his life, the more strongly he may be able to perceive disintegration. However, it seems to change from the means into the purpose of his life. This change is sustained by illusion that this world continues permanently. This illusion of his is probably similar to others'. At this stage of the plot, he is merely an ambitious young man who is not different from the ordinary. He does not face disintegration as worldly reality and is swallowed up by illusion.

In tandem with the development of these four main characters, Kyōko is also changing. As was said, in her house there is a mood, prevalent in wartime, where people perceive death in war as disintegration. However, when she realises that her divorced husband schemes to return to her house, she begins to think her days are finishing. The mood in wartime is being lost even from Kyōko's house. She says to Natsuo, "This world is strong." "I must be ill, so I was afraid of monotony or dullness. Repetition, monotony and dullness, they are liquors, which keep us drunk for a longer time than adventures. It is no longer necessary for me to awake."[40] I think, as well as Seiichirō, she is swallowed up by illusion that this world prospers eternally. She gives up facing disintegration as worldly reality. Then Natsuo mumbles, "We are the arrows which missed the target. Why? We missed the target."[41]

As was discussed above, all intentions fail to embody worldly reality, and none of the main characters can find a way to approach it. However, we find that one possibility is left. Near the end of the work, there is an episode with Natsuo and a daffodil. This should be analysed carefully. In this episode, Natsuo describes the flower by his pillow as follows:

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[40] *ibid.*, pp. 531-2.
[41] *ibid.*, p. 532

> The flower was quite pure and beautiful, and no small piece of dirt can be found on it. All petals are very fresh as if born right now. They have been folded in the bud tightly, but now they draw exquisite rolling lines on their surfaces in the morning sun.[42]

The inside of the bud opens up naturally. The unseen inside of the bud emerges as a flower on the outside. In fact, illusion changes into worldly reality quite naturally. Osamu tries to bail the inner illusion out of his body. Therefore, in this flower, we can argue that there is a state which Osamu seeks. Then Natsuo continues:

> Gradually, I begin to feel that I am betraying myself. Is this flower a present for me from the mystic world? Can the mystic thing appear in front of me with such a perfect form?[43]

Natsuo, who is addicted to mysticism after the incident at the sea of trees, realises worldly reality in front of him. It is possible that this flower does not symbolise "the mystic world", but demonstrates worldly reality in daily life. This is perhaps what the boxer, Shunkichi, intends to attain and fails to do so. Natsuo continues:

> My eyes see this daffodil. This is the daffodil without a shadow of doubt, and I feel that I and this flower, the subject and the object, belong to the same solid world. This would be the nature of worldly reality, wouldn't it? Consequently, this is the very flower of reality, isn't it?[44]

He does not regard himself as a special spectator, but considers himself a person who exists within worldly reality. He seems to perceive that he also is part of this world. It can be the most important perception that Natsuo needs to have. Then he says:

> I feel that this flower is living.[45]

Living creatures will surely die. The living flower will certainly wither. It can happen tomorrow. We may say that this fact breaks Seiichirō's illusion. He is under the

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[42] *ibid.*, p. 537.
[43] *loc. cit.*
[44] *loc. cit.*
[45] *loc. cit.*

illusion that his successful life as a businessman will continue for a long time. Finally, Natsuo says that this flower symbolises "the centre of worldly reality and the core of it".[46] In fact, this flower symbolises the natural state of worldly reality. It is possible that the answer to the metaphysical questions, which the four main characters developed with great difficulty, is found in this small flower at the end of the novel. Natsuo realises it. After Natsuo awakes, many facts are cited, such as about passers-by on the roads, many kinds of buildings and the railways. Natsuo perceives that it is the first time he has seen them and enjoys his experience of them. Then, having an attachment for them, he says hello to these external beings. Thanks to the small daffodil, I believe that he unites inner illusion with worldly reality naturally without their conflicting with each other. That is to say, he understands the natural state of worldly reality as disintegration. He finds a way of living in the post-war period without being swallowed up by illusion like Shunkichi, Osamu and Seiichirō.

At that time, it is decided that Kyōko's divorced husband is going to return to her house. When Kyōko listens to Natsuo's story about the daffodil, she at first disagrees with him. However, she gradually finds herself in agreement with him. I analyse this as follows. Kyōko, who has to live in the post-war period after her husband's return, finds a kind of hope in Natsuo's story. She thinks that, without the mood in wartime, she can face worldly reality like Natsuo. In fact, she believes that she can also live in the post-war period without being swallowed up by illusion.

In Kyōko's house is her daughter, Masako. She is a small girl but she has an air of mystery about her. She always talks to her father's photograph, feeling that she will call him back. In addition, when Kyōko attempts to go to bed with Seiichirō, she suddenly stands in their way. We can argue that her calling back her father leads to disintegration of Kyōko's lifestyle. She also leads to the failure, which is a type of disintegration, of Kyōko and Seiichirō's attempt to make love. Masako perhaps stands for worldly reality as disintegration. It is important that she is a girl. Although she lives in the post-war period, she did not experience the end of the war in which people lost the idea of death in war as disintegration. Consequently, she symbolises that worldly reality exists in the post-war period. Masako likes only Natsuo amongst the main characters. The reason is probably that she finds out Natsuo's talent which discovers

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[46] *ibid.*, p. 539.

the way to face reality without being swallowed up by illusion. Therefore, it seems that Masako's nature is close to that of the daffodil which brings out a link between inner illusion and worldly reality. However, I cannot help saying that the logical development through the daffodil is quite difficult. The solution represented by it can not answer the concrete questions. What one should do to face worldly reality in the post-war period is still be unclear.

Many critics have made caustic comments on this work. For example, Etō Jun states, "*Kyōko no ie* is written as a novel, and is a failure as a novel. This novel is unusual, because it is static and lacks conflict amongst the characters."[47] Perhaps it is the most common criticism which evaluates this novel as a failure in terms of the absence of dramatic development. Edward G. Seidensticker, Saeki Shōichi and Yoshida Masashi also make similar criticisms.[48] It is certain that in this novel there is very little interchange and communication amongst the main characters. It can be criticised as a failure. However, I believe, the greatest reason for failure is not in little interchange and communication but in the obscure way in which worldly reality in the post-war period is faced. This is clearly found in the last scene of the novel:

> "I said to you many times, did I not? Stay here. When we receive your father, say 'Welcome back, father.'"
>
> This should be an example of the final pride and dignity of Kyōko shown at the end of her life. For this purpose, she takes trouble to choose this sofa. When she sits on it, her back is to the door. She intends to stand up slowly, and to turn around to greet him after hearing his footsteps coming into the house.
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> The front door opens. Then a door to the salon swings open. Surprised at this, Kyōko turns around to the door involuntarily.
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> Released from their chains, seven Alsatians and Great Danes run in through the door together. The bark of the dogs resounds there, and in a moment the spacious salon is filled with the smell of them.[49]

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[47] Etō Jun, "Mishima Yukio no ie" [Mishima Yukio's House], Akiyama Shun (ed.), *Gunzō Nihon no sakka* 18 [The Portraits: Japanese Writers, Vol. 18] (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1990), p. 122.

[48] Edward Seidensticker, "Mishima Yukio", *Gendai sakka ron* [Studies on Modern Japanese Writers] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1964); Saeki Shōichi, "Mishima Yukio ni okeru seiō to Nihon" [Western World and Japan in Mishima Yukio], *Nihon no watashi wo motomete* [Searching for Myself as a Japanese] (Tokyo: Kawadeshobōshinsha, 1974); and Yoshida Masashi, "Mishima Yukio ron: *Kyōko no ie* wo megutte" [On Mishima Yukio: Concerning *Kyōko's House*], *Aoyama gobun,* Vol. 9 (Tokyo: Aoyama Gakuin University, 1979).

[49] Mishima, "Kyōko no ie", *Works* 11, pp. 550-1.

What is described in this last scene is worldly reality as disintegration of Kyōko's plan to greet her husband with pride. In addition, worldly reality as the passage of time is also described. It brings out disintegration of Kyōko's house where the mood in wartime has remained. These are descriptions of worldly reality as disintegration. Before this episode, Kyōko hopes to understand worldly reality and to live in the post-war period without being swallowed up by illusion. In illusion, one loses a sense of disintegration and believes that things and people remain in the world permanently. Therefore, in terms of saving her from illusion or retrieving her from illusion, disintegration caused by her husband's return should be welcomed. She should celebrate that she can start her new life in the post-war period not with illusion but with disintegration as worldly reality. However, the mood in the last scene seems tragic rather than joyful. Something important is rudely destroyed. The grief for it may be found in this scene. Is the incident in the last scene one of hope or despair? I think the story has an obscure ending, and the answer cannot be found there. The logic, which has developed elaborately by degrees in the novel, becomes unclear on the final page. It is probably related to the point that the concrete way to correspond with worldly reality is not shown in this work. I regard this unclear logic in the last scene as the greatest reason for the failure of the novel.

I analysed the inner world of the novel above. In the next stage, the position of this novel in Mishima's works will be investigated. With reference to this novel, Donald Keene states, "the purpose of this work is to develop a philosophical belief in the form of the novel;"[50] and Torii points out, "These four main characters stand for four periods in Mishima's life."[51] We may say that these references have something to do with Etō's comment on this novel, "the enumeration of verbose random notes about Mishima himself."[52] All of these statements indicate that this novel, *Kyōko no ie*, includes many elements which are linked directly to the author, Mishima. Considering the fact that Mishima says, "I threw all of myself into this long story,"[53] what they indicated are right. For example, there is the following reference in *Kyōko no ie*:

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[50] Donald Keene, "Mishima Yukio ron" [On Mishima Yukio], *Nihon no sakka* [Japanese Writers] (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1972), p. 209.
[51] Torii, "Kyōko no ie", *Kokubungaku*, May 1970, Zōkangō [Special Edition], p. 71.
[52] Etō, "Mishima Yukio no ie", *Gunzō Nihon no sakka* 18, p. 122.
[53] Mishima, "*Kyōko no ie* soko de watashi ga kaita mono", *Works* 29, p. 360.

> Ideas have to be as clear as muscles. It is much better that muscles supply vague ideas buried in the inner darkness. Although muscles belong strictly to individuals, at the same time, they are much more universal than emotion. Moreover, although they resemble words, they are much clearer and smarter than words. On these points, they are a better *medium for ideas* than words.[54]

As was said in Chapter 3, Mishima intended to release the body from intelligence. This theme is paraphrased into the release of worldly reality from illusion. This may link to Mishima's stronger inclination towards the body in his critical essay, "Taiyō to tetsu" [Sun and Steel] (1965) via the point of the quotation above. We can argue that the contents of this novel are close to the development of Mishima's philosophy.

When Mishima was writing *Kyōko no ie*, he stated his intentions in that work. According to him, he attempted to deal with the post-war period as a main theme in *Kyōko no ie* as well as how he treated the individual in *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion.*[55] It is probable that his involvement in the post-war period was the most significant theme for him. He wrote about the individual who burns illusion and chooses worldly reality in *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion.* It was a kind of full stop for his wish to live in an illusion. In *Kyōko no ie*, he also describes four young men who try to face worldly reality from their own angles. I think it was a new starting-line for him in the post-war period. However, the post-war period showed an unexpected landscape for Mishima who regarded the natural state of worldly reality as disintegration. Firstly, he defined his thinking during wartime as illusion. Then he made an effort to join the society where he lived in the post-war period. In his mind, the post-war period meant worldly reality. However, it was found that society in the post-war period, which is dealt with in *Kyōko no ie*, was not the same as worldly reality. People lost their sense of worldly reality as disintegration and were drunk on illusion created by economic prosperity. They never intended to focus on disintegration which made up their daily life. It can be argued that for Mishima, who knew World War II, wartime was closer to worldly reality rather than the post-war period. Especially in wartime, being conscious of death as worldly reality, people

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[54] Mishima, "Kyōko no ie", *Works* 11, p. 78.
[55] Mishima Yukio, "Jūhassai to sanjūyonsai no shōzōga- Bungaku jiden" [The Portraits of Eighteen years old and Thirty Four years old: A Literary Autobiography], *Works* 29, p. 338.

lived desperately. The post-war period was only one aspect of worldly reality, but the people who lived in the post-war period did not understand it. At that time, the Japanese economy entered a period of unprecedented prosperity. They never doubted that it would continue permanently and made efforts to gain higher social status during it. We can argue that it had been quite difficult for Mishima to seek worldly reality in such an environment.

However, through writing *Kyōko no ie*, he still seemed to look for a way to face worldly reality in the post-war period. It is symbolised in the episode involving Natsuo and the daffodil. It is the key to linking the inner being with the external being. In that state, like the daffodil, one's inner illusion can correspond with external worldly reality. When Mishima sought a way to correspond with worldly reality, he inevitably challenged the code of values of society in the post-war period. In my analysis, in this respect, his attitude was similar to that of Wilde who revealed hypocrisy in English society in the nineteenth century and insisted on reforming general welfare in works such as "The Soul of Man Under Socialism". It is mere coincidence that Wilde also refers to the daffodil in his study of art. However, one can find his concept of beauty in that flower. At the beginning of "The Critic as Artist" he states, "How exquisite these single daffodils are! They seem to be made of amber and cool ivory. They are like Greek things of the best period."[56] In this, Wilde praises the beauty of the daffodils, which unites the classical beauty of Greece and that of his day. He also combines the ideal beauty and the real world over time and space through the character's mouth. It was the purpose of art and also the nature of art. As the daffodil plays an important role for the artist in Mishima's novel, Wilde represents the natural state of art through the daffodil. However, their concepts are not the same. The greatest difference in their concepts can be found in how they intend to resolve the dichotomy. As discussed in the previous chapters, Wilde admitted the independence of various kinds of beauty and accepted that beauty included all of them. Therefore, maintaining their own characteristics, all opposite things are blended in the process of creating a new kind of beauty. On the other hand, it is probable that Mishima tried to end the dichotomy. In his way, opposite things cannot exist with their counters. Illusion has to

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[56] Wilde, "The Critic as Artist" *Works*, p. 1110.

be replaced with worldly reality. Thus, as was quoted above, in the case of the daffodil, the inside should change naturally into the outside.

Therefore, he struggled to exclude illusion. However, in *Kyōko no ie*, can the main characters find a way to accord with worldly reality in the post-war period? Although Natsuo and Kyōko are provided with the clue for the solution, how do they seek worldly reality concretely in the post-war period? In the end, as I analysed, the answer is not given. In *Kyōko no ie*, Mishima searched for a way to face worldly reality without being swallowed up by illusion from various angles depicted by the main characters. However, I think that no concrete method emerged for him, after all. From this point of view, Noguchi Takehiko's opinion, "It [*Kyōko no ie*] is the final fiction of Mishima's which is mostly set in the post-war period,"[57] is interesting. Like the main characters in his work, Mishima could not find a contact point between his effort to pursue worldly reality and the post-war period. As a result, perhaps he rapidly lost interest in the post-war period and no longer set that period as the main theme of his fiction. This can be the reason, after this novel, why he moved the setting of his fiction from the post-war period to the time when people were conscious about death as disintegration.

When one sees the close relationship between this work and the development of Mishima's philosophy, the references to Natsuo, a painter, can be interpreted in the same way as those to Mishima, a novelist. In fact, Natsuo's drawing pictures must be similar to Mishima's writing fiction. In both cases, the falsehood of perception and representation appears. As was stated, it is a trap caused by limited human ability in perception and representation. One understands worldly reality in one's own judgement as disintegration and is actually swallowed up by illusion. What is clarified by Natsuo is that neither perception nor representation can capture worldly reality, namely, separate disintegration. All we can understand is the concept of disintegration. Nevertheless, only Natsuo is saved from failure. It possibly means that Mishima would still be able to be a novelist who perceived and represented worldly reality like a painter. This fact demonstrates his decision to seek a way to face worldly reality as a novelist. That he continued writing fiction after *Kyōko no ie* is evidence of

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[57] Noguchi, *Mishima Yukio no sekai*, p. 191.

his decision. It is possible that pursuing the life of a novelist became a kind of challenge to perception and representation with words. For example, the listing of facts is found in the episode of Natsuo and the daffodil. These are also found in his final work, *Hōjō no umi* [The Sea of Fertility] (1965-71), in more direct form. This will be analysed in Chapter 7 from the perspective of artificiality and worldly reality.

Part III: Conclusion

As discussed throughout this Part III, art has a role in permanently recording changing concepts. Based on my analysis, I interpret their views of art as follows. Wilde's view of art required that it should show the unity of elements beyond any difference in beauty. His background deeply influenced this. He was born a member of a Protestant family in Ireland where most people were Catholic. Then he went to England whose relationship with Ireland was never good and drew nearer to Catholicism in the land of the Anglican Church. He always found himself in a situation between two opposing ideologies. Therefore, he admitted the independence of beauty and hoped all elements were integrated in beauty. Wilde believed that art could give opportunities to integrate beauty to people. On the other hand, Mishima's view of art reflected the natural state of worldly reality as disintegration. This developed from the fact that he lived in the pre-war, wartime and post-war periods. Until the end of World War II, he lived with the terror of sudden death. Therefore, worldly reality appeared to him as having a one-off nature. People in the post-war period were not conscious about disintegration in their daily lives. Mishima regarded this lifestyle as illusion and tried to accord with disintegration in daily life in the post-war period. He intended to show disintegration through art.

Although their views of art were distinct from each other, parallels between them can be indicated as below. In their views, art had a role to record beauty or its disintegration and to show this to observers. In fact, art supported people in developing their understanding of the world. Thus, Wilde and Mishima both attempted to spread their philosophies to others and seriously tried to reform the social system. As stated, Wilde criticised the system of English society in the nineteenth century, which robbed people of opportunities to develop their talent. On the other hand, making accusations against the prosperity of the Japanese economy in the post-war period, Mishima intended to show people the natural state of worldly reality. They did it through their pens as writers. They attempted to encourage people to think seriously about how they should live in each period.

However, I conclude that because of the difference between their views of art, their targets aimed for through art were also different from each other. Wilde intended to make his artworks embrace any difference and conflict. On the other hand, Mishima regarded his works as quite narrow paths to weave through the conflict between illusion and worldly reality. As a result, Wilde's interest had had a tendency to spread out to the external world, and Mishima's tended to converge on his individual, ideal and inner world. After reading Wilde's work, *De Profundis* (Edition of 1949), Mishima made accusations against it and called it "an excuse for his deeds" and "sophistry".[58] One of the reasons for these negative words by Mishima can be found in the complicated consistency and inconsistency between their views of art. Based on his view of art, Mishima started writing his final work, *Hōjō no umi*, which is a tetralogy. He threw all of himself into that work, and the fundamental link between Mishima and Wilde will appear. It will be dealt with in Chapter 7 of this thesis.

[58] Mishima Yukio, "Kanpon *Gokuchūki:* Wairudo saku", *Works* 25, p. 413.

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Part IV: Mishima and Wilde: The Quest for the Absolute

It is interesting that although their philosophies were certainly not consistent, in the final stages of their lives Mishima and Wilde both accepted a constant existence transcending human life. As defined in the introduction,[1] the Absolute means a constant existence which transcends human life. In other words, it is the transcendent existence which is independent of the changeable phenomena in this world. In addition, it is the source of everything. In conventional Western Christian thought, the Absolute is God, and Christ is the Son of God. In Mishima's philosophy the Absolute took a different form. In his final works, Mishima frequently referred to the Japanese Emperor and the Japanese emperor system. Before he killed himself by *harakiri* at the General Headquarters of the Self- Defence Forces in Tokyo, he praised the Emperor in a speech in front of the members of the SDF. These references and actions of his were related to his philosophy in considering the Emperor to be the Absolute. Wilde mentions Christ's way of life in his works such as *De Profundis* (1897) and *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898). Moreover, he was baptised on his deathbed. It is probable that Catholicism, which appealed to him in his youth, was still attractive to him. Although both of them came to believe in the Absolute, there must be a wide difference between them. In this part, I will investigate why they searched for the Absolute and what kind of gap separated Mishima from Wilde.

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[1] See p. 6.

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Chapter 6. Wilde: From Pluralism to his Final Position

As stated in Chapter 4, Wilde rejected any type of discrimination and prejudice. Influenced by the Renaissance and Pater, he dreamed that every element harmonised with each other in beauty over time and space, free from prejudice. Then he believed that art permanently showed the observer this ideal situation. When he saw English society in the nineteenth century from this viewpoint, influenced by Ruskin, he could not help blaming the social system which was far from ideal. After that, where did his pluralism lead him? Through analysis of his late works such as *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) and *Salomé* (1893), this issue will be examined in this chapter.

6.1. Pluralism and Chaos

In 1878, an interesting incident occurred in London. That was the suit brought by James Abbott McNeill Whistler (1834-1903) against John Ruskin. The origin of this suit was Ruskin's review of Whistler's painting, *Nocturne in Black and Gold* (1875).[2] This painting, which depicts fireworks, is part of his series on night views of the river Thames. It can be called a pioneering work of abstract art and became popular at the Grosvenor Gallery in London at its opening exhibition from 1 May 1877. This museum was established by Sir Coutts Lindsay and his wife Blanche. Some art galleries such as the Dudley Gallery and The Fine Art Society opened in the 1870s with the purpose of supporting young artists who were treated coldly by the Royal Academy. It is possible that the Grosvenor Gallery was one of these. It displayed eight of Whistler's works such as *Arrangement in Grey and Black, No. 2: Thomas Carlyle* (1872) and *Nocturne in Blue and Gold* (1871-74).[3]

At that time, Ruskin was the Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford (1870-9) and had issued the monthly magazine, *Fors Clavigera: Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain.* When the opening exhibition of the Grosvenor Gallery was held, he returned from his trip to Venice and visited the

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[2] Later, its title was changed into *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket.*
[3] Its title was changed into *Nocturne: Grey and Gold, Westminster Bridge.*

Gallery in June 1877. He wrote his review of this exhibition and criticised Whistler's picture in Vol. 43 of his magazine (July 1877) as follows:

> For Mr. Whistler's own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsay ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approached the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen, and heard, much of Cockney impudence before now; but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face.[4]

As compared with favourable comments on these works by Edward Burne-Jones (1833-98) in the first half of the article, we may say that this judgement is quite harsh. Whistler was displeased at this comment and brought an action for libel.

Referring to the pictures by Whistler, such as *Symphony in Grey and Green: in the Ocean* and *Nocturne in Blue and Silver*, in the Winter Exhibition of Cabinet Pictures in Oil at the Dudley Gallery in 1872, Ruskin criticised them thus in his lecture at Oxford:

> I never saw anything so impudent on the walls of any exhibition, in any country, as last year in London. It was a daub professing to be a "harmony in pink and white" (or some such nonsense); absolute rubbish, and which had taken about a quarter of an hour to scrawl or daub – it had no pretence to be called painting. The price asked for it was two hundred and fifty guineas.[5]

It is probable that his attitude was quite sincere and moralistic. In court, Whistler said that he spent only two days drawing his picture, *Nocturne in Black and Gold.*[6] It is clear that Ruskin regarded Whistler's drawing technique here and his attitude towards creating this work as negligent and dishonest. Perhaps *Nocturne in Black and Gold,* a painting using an impressionist technique, was considered crude and immature in its high-speed, rough drawing. I think that Ruskin blamed "conceited"[7] Whistler for

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[4] John Ruskin, "Fors Clavigera", E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds.), *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 29 (London: George Allen, 1907), p. 160.
[5] John Ruskin, "Ill Shield and Apron", E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds.), *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 23 (London: George Allen, 1906), p. 49.
[6] Linda Merrill, *A Pot of Paint: Aesthetics on Trial in Whistler v. Ruskin* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press in collaboration with the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1992), p. 148.
[7] Ruskin, Appendix: "My Own Article on Whistler", Cook and Wedderburn (eds.), *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 29, p. 586.

unfairly charging a high price for his slipshod product, and it was his challenge to the mercantile tendency of the times.[8]

The case was decided in favour of Whistler, the plaintiff. However, the amount of the legal claim for damages against Ruskin was only one farthing (a quarter of a penny), and Whistler was ordered to pay his share of the legal costs. Because of this decision, he was declared bankrupt. Thus, it is difficult to say who the true winner in this suit was.

Wilde's attitude towards Whistler was ambivalent. Wilde also visited the opening exhibition of the Grosvenor Gallery and criticises the works in that gallery in his critical art essay, "The Grosvenor Gallery" (1877). He appreciates Watts and Burne-Jones in this essay and comments as follows on Whistler's *Nocturne in Black and Gold* and *Nocturne in Blue and Silver*:

> These pictures are certainly worth looking at for about as long as one looks at a real rocket, that is, for somewhat less than a quarter of a minute.[9]

This is certainly an acid comment. Of Whistler's works, he admits only *Arrangement in Grey and Black No. 2: Portrait of Thomas Carlyle* as a masterpiece, his other works are evaluated in a similar way to the above. As the former analysis indicates, for Wilde, works of art were where people met a wide variety of values placed on beauty beyond time and space. When he wrote this critical art essay, he had not finalised this view of art completely. However, in this essay, he appreciates Hunt's attempt to deal with "historical subjects, or scenes of real life, mostly from the East"[10] in the Western context such as in *Shadow of the Cross*. I think we can find that his view above was being formed. Thus, as Ruskin made accusations against Whistler, Wilde did not respond positively to the impression created by Whistler's paintings. In such an impression, the artist's intention was too unclear for the observer to identify with. This runs the risk of paying no attention to the observer's encounter with beauty in his works. Thus, when it is judged from the pluralistic viewpoint, it may become exclusive.

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[8] For further details of this issue, see Appendix 4.
[9] Wilde, "The Grosvenor Gallery", *Miscellanies, FCE*, p. 18.
[10] *ibid.*, p. 6.

On the other hand, it is also certain that Whistler's view of art included elements which were close to Wilde's. When Whistler answered the defendant's attorney, Sir John Holker, he said:

> As to what the picture represents, that depends upon who looks at it. To some persons it may represent all that I intended; to others it may represent nothing.[11]

It is clear that he believed that works of art existed through the connection between the artist's intention and the observer's subjectivity. This is how new kinds of beauty were created which Wilde referred to in his critical essays. In the lecture at New York in 1882, five years after his critical art essay, "The Grosvenor Gallery", Wilde discusses Whistler thus:

> You should have such men as Whistler among you to teach you the beauty and joy of colour. Take Mr. Whistler's 'Symphony in White,' which you no doubt have imagined to be something quite bizarre. It is nothing of the sort. Think of a cool grey sky flecked here and there with white clouds, a grey ocean and three wonderfully beautiful figures robed in white, leaning over the water and dropping white flowers from their fingers. Here is no extensive intellectual scheme to trouble you, and no metaphysics of which we have had quite enough in art. But if the simple and unaided colour strike the right keynote, the whole conception is made clear.[12]

We can argue that these Wildean phrases about Whistler in this quotation come from a similarity in their view of beauty. As formerly analysed, it is influenced by nothing and it exists only in the relationship with each person. Combining with people's different backgrounds, various kinds of new beauty are created. Beauty should be wide-ranging and tolerant to permit such development. Answering a question posed by William Comer Petheram, the attorney for the plaintiff, Whistler said that he intended to remove all narrative interest, which was not necessary to appreciate his artwork, from the observer's eyes by naming it "Nocturne".[13] In this point that beauty is independent of anything and its existence limited by nothing. We may say that this view of Whistler's was close to Pater's and Wilde's. In a lecture in 1883, Wilde described Whistler as "a man living amongst us who unites in himself all the qualities of the

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[11] *ibid.*, p. 151.
[12] Wilde, "House Decoration", *Miscellanies, FCE*, p. 286.
[13] Merrill, *A Pot of Paint: Aesthetics on Trial in Whistler v. Ruskin*, p. 144.

noblest art, whose work is a joy for all time, who is, himself, a master of all time."[14] This reference demonstrates to us Wilde's view that beauty includes everything in it and transcends even the mood of the time. He also regarded Whistler as "a master" of this kind of beauty. He applauded Whistler in his attempt to exhibit multifaceted beauty and clear away any elements which limited the range of beauty. When the attorney for the defendant, Holker, asked if the price of two hundred guineas for two days labour for *Nocturne in Black and Gold* was too expensive, Whistler answered, "No. I ask it for the knowledge I have gained in the work of a lifetime."[15] He probably believed that the most important thing in his life, above all, was art as independent beauty.

As for the suit between Ruskin and Whistler, we can argue that Wilde's stance was not one-sided. Sometimes, he was on Ruskin's side and on another occasion on Whistler's. This swaying of his is very important. It demonstrates to us that he vacillated between Ruskin's view and Whistler's. On the point of making works of art open to observers, Ruskin's stance and Whistler's were quite similar. They believed that works of art were accepted and understood by many people. I analyse this issue as follows. For this to happen, Ruskin believed that each work of art should have a clear meaning to be understood. He also required that artists made a great effort to create works that could be understood by the observer and considered it a moral responsibility of the artist. The fact that Ruskin criticised a high-speed, rough work of Whistler's, *Nocturne in Black and Gold*, reinforces this opinion. It probably links up with his religious viewpoint which demanded that people be modest as children of God and appreciate nature created by God. In his view, paintings which elaborately depict objects as themselves and as creatures of God, are good works. It may be easy for people in general to understand themes and the creator's intention in each work of art. On the other hand, Whistler left free spaces in his works of art to allow the viewer to make his own interpretation of the work. His paintings using symbolic ways of representation permit various interpretations. Observers may interpret his works depending on their own code of values and background. In these ways, Ruskin and Whistler both intended to open up works of art to people.

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[14] Wilde, "Lecture to Art Students", *Miscellanies, FCE*, pp. 319-20.
[15] Merrill, *A Pot of Paint: Aesthetic on Trial in Whistler v. Ruskin*, p. 148.

I think that this reflected Wilde's pluralism. It is certain that symbolism kept pace with the times more than realism. Thus Wilde perhaps had looked towards symbolism. However, the following reference can be found in his essay, "London Models" (1889):

> In fact, they realise very completely Mr. Whistler's idea of the function of an art critic, for they pass no criticisms at all. They accept all schools of art with the grand catholicity of the auctioneer, and sit to a fantastic young impressionist as readily as to a learned and laborious academician. They are neither for the Whistlerites nor against them; the quarrel between the school of facts and the school of effects touches them not; idealistic and naturalistic are words that convey no meaning to their ears; [...][16]

In this quotation, he refers to the character of models for paintings at that time. They transform themselves in answer to the artists' demands. However, for this reason, they cannot preserve their identity. They can neither establish their independence nor have their own codes of values. It is possible that this is close to Whistler's view of works of art. Excessive emphasis on the observer's interpretation leads to the artist's own original intentions being neglected. The more works of art permit different interpretations by various people, the less clear their original intention becomes. In this way, beauty, which Wilde believed to be the main criterion of art, is also transformed into various forms. As a result, it is difficult to understand what beauty is and to decide what kind of goal people should aim for through works of art. I concluded that the reason why Wilde set beauty at the centre was to release people from any prejudice and discrimination. Longing for beauty, everyone may become beautiful. However, I point out that, amongst its diverse interpretations, people can only believe their individual senses and ideas about beauty. If people do so and believe absolutely in their own opinions, it brings out prejudice and discrimination. In fact, if one ignores the artist's intention, art may merely lead to confusion. Attracted by Whistler's opinion, which permitted any kind of interpretation, I think that Wilde did not agree to it totally. Although he seemed to approve of Whistler's idea about multifaceted art, for Wilde, art had to set a target for people.

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[16] Wilde, "London Models", *Works*, pp. 975-6.

On the other hand, according to the former analysis, Wilde certainly favoured Ruskin's strong sense of mission and consideration for the weak. Ruskin's insistence that works of art translate abstract idea into reality also corresponded to Wilde's view of art and beauty. However, it is probable that his unshakeable self-confidence, which sometimes inclined towards self-righteousness, overwhelmed Wilde. Wilde said that he could no longer go along with Ruskin, in his critical essay, "L' Envoi" (1882).[17] Tim Hilton introduces the topic of Ruskin's excessive morality in his book. After Turner's death in 1851, Ruskin was consulted about the disposal of his works and found unknown ones in the basement of the National Gallery. "One small group of drawings might have epitomized, for Ruskin, Turner's moral decline. [...] Ruskin already believed that there was no point in preserving 'valueless' scribbles or scraps." [18] It is said that he burned them there and then. There is no more evidence to prove the credibility of this episode. However, at least it is possible that Ruskin was generally regarded as a stern enough person to take such action. We can argue that the point which Wilde could not accept, was this kind of narrow-mindedness. This was the issue which Wilde disliked and tried hard to avoid.

Whistler's idea of respect for multiplicity and individuality can lead one to confusion. On the other hand, Ruskin's emphasis on high morality tends to become an exclusive attitude. Both of them are in danger of bringing out prejudice and discrimination. I think this was likened to the issue between consciousness of others and respect for originality in works of art. Between Catholicism and Protestantism, Ireland and England, and Pater and Ruskin, Wilde had suffered from his wavering position. As was stated in the previous chapters, he arrived at the idea of the multifaceted nature of art and beauty. However, he was actually swaying between these poles even in his view of art and beauty. Perhaps the suit between Ruskin and Whistler and subsequent incidents provide us with a trigger to think of this position of Wilde's. It is certain that this issue did not easily resolve itself. In the next section, I will investigate it further using Wilde's written works.

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[17] See Footnote 55 in Chapter 4.
[18] Tim Hilton, *John Ruskin: The Early Years 1819-1859* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 250.

6.2. Wandering in the Multilayered Novel: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890)

All thirteen chapters of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* were printed in the American magazine, *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, in July 1890. Then Wilde added seven chapters and "The Preface", and it was published in the form of a book in the following year. Originally, it was planned to print another story, "The Fisherman and his Soul" in a volume of this magazine. However, it is said that the publisher frowned on its short length and its being a fairy tale, so it was replaced with *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.[19] Later, "The Fisherman and his Soul" was published as part of his second collection of short fairy stories, *The House of Pomegranates* (1981).

It is interesting that in both stories the protagonists separate themselves into two figures. In "The Fisherman and his Soul", a fisherman detaches his soul from himself, and they act independently. In *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Dorian and his portrait separate and go their different ways. Perhaps the similarity in these plots is connected to the conflicts between the opposing concepts in Wilde which I have indicated in the previous parts of this thesis. At that time, these conflicts were a big issue for him. In this section I will examine how Wilde deals with it in his work.

It can be said that *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Wilde's only novel, contains many themes already analysed. For example, when Basil Hallward, the painter of Dorian's portrait, says to his friend, Lord Henry Wotton, "You might see nothing in him. I see everything in him,"[20] it implies many aspects of and potential in one person. We can say that it reflects Wilde's pluralism. However, when we see *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as a multilayered novel, I think various significant points worthy of study appear. Considering the story as a whole, one can easily find differing interpretations. For instance, one can view this novel as a decadent story, which challenges the morality of the time. From the first scene of the story, Henry ridicules the veneer of social justice many times in different ways. He insists on availability of "the senses"[21] and celebrates a "new Hedonism".[22] It can be one of the author's

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[19] Urabe Hisashi, "Doppelgänger", Yamada (ed.) *Osukā Wairudo jiten*, p. 225.
[20] Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Works*, p. 24.
[21] *ibid.*, p. 30.
[22] *ibid.*, p. 31.

strategies to make the mood of this novel immoral and dangerous. Apart from Henry's cynicism at the beginning of the story, there are many references of admiration for Dorian's beauty. It probably suggests a homoerotic atmosphere and conveys to the reader an immoral impression. The great number of accusations against the immorality of this novel, which appeared after the publication of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, proved the success of the author's strategy. However, I point out that a question arises from this interpretation. Living a life of pleasure, Dorian Gray finally stabs himself in the picture and dies. If Wilde intended to write an immoral novel, why does the hero do this? If he had been writing a sensual novel, he should have concluded it with a scene where Dorian enjoys his sporting life. This question can be the basis of another interpretation. It focuses on the final scene and interprets it as a moral story. This interpretation leads to the belief that the author condemns the hedonism of Dorian. According to this, it is also easy to understand why Basil, who warns Dorian to revert to his moral life, is described positively in the story. Then Dorian is punished on charges of immorality. The possibility of these opposing interpretations reminds us of Wilde's pluralism. However, although these different interpretations demonstrate the pluralistic nature of this novel, I believe the situation is more complicated. For example, in the final scene, what is punished? Dorian's cruelty? Immorality? Alternatively, is Dorian's false immorality punished by a true one? This makes clarification of Wilde's intention in this novel difficult. Did he try to accuse English society in the nineteenth century of fraud because of the decadent lifestyle? Or, did he intend to show that decadence was a necessary evil for English society? This confusion is probably not only related to interpretations of the whole story but also to different impressions of each character. For instance, although he is a wrongdoer, Dorian is attractive. Henry is a trifler, but his aphorisms are interesting. Although Basil's warning is important, he disappears in the middle of the plot. These elements may prevent the reader from arriving at a straightforward interpretation. I will analyse this story as a multilayered novel and, in the context of his philosophy, attempt to examine Wilde's intention in writing this work.

As Tomiyama Takao points out, there are many moods in this story.[23] For example, the three-way conversation amongst Basil, Dorian and Henry at the beginning of this novel contributes to the creation of the decadent mood. In addition, description about Dorian's mother makes the mood of a romantic love story. Judging from Wilde's pluralistic stance, it is certain that he did it intentionally. I think it is important for us to investigate what these different moods bring out in the reader.

In Chapter 1, we may easily find stimulating aphorisms such as:

> The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it. Resist it, and your soul grows sick with longing for the things it has forbidden to itself, with desire for what its monstrous laws have made monstrous and unlawful.[24]

However, in the following chapter, this decadent mood changes into that of a romantic love story by a tale of tragic love of Dorian's mother. These unrealistic, different impressions are enhanced by other elements in the following chapter. For example, Lord Fermor says to Henry:

> 'Humph! tell your Aunt Agatha, Harry, not to bother me any more with her charity appeals. I am sick of them. Why, the good woman thinks that I have nothing to do but to write cheques for her silly fads.'[25]

It can be argued that this accuses the rich of using donations as a means of self-satisfaction. Thinking of Wilde's attitude towards fraud in English society in the nineteenth century, this probably becomes clearer. In this chapter, a discussion about the United States as a new country is also given, and we can see some opinions of British people such as, "They are absolutely reasonable. I think that is their distinguishing characteristic."[26] Moreover, there are references to the protagonists' political stance, to the bourgeoisie who run collieries and to poverty in the East End. It is possible that these elements form the impression of a social novel. They provide a quite realistic mood in this story, and this mood is regarded as the opposite of a love story. The gap between them clearly conveys the difference in their mood. However,

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[23] Tomiyama Takao, "Yūkaisuru tekisuto no kigōron" [The Semiotics of a Text which Kidnaps the Reader], *Yuriika* [Eureka], September 1980, p. 127.
[24] Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Works*, pp. 28-9.
[25] *loc. cit.*
[26] *ibid.*, p. 42.

they are mixed in the same chapter. This mixture is very interesting. It is also interesting that Dorian, the son of the love story, goes to the East End for charity. In fact, we can argue that he is the link between these different impressions. With a central focus on Dorian, this chapter is coloured by some different moods. Similarly, after a love story in the aristocratic world, a melodrama between Dorian and Sibyl Vane, who is an actress in a less than prestigious theatre, but has a pure heart, is disposed.

What is the purpose of this structure? To discuss this issue, the following quotations seems to be helpful. When Jim, Sibyl's younger brother, says to Sibyl that if Dorian does her any wrong he will kill Dorian, she answers thus:

> 'Oh, don't be so serious, Jim. You are like one of the heroes of those silly melodramas mother used to be so fond of acting in.[27]

This quotation may allow the reader to find Sibyl's viewpoint outside the story. She regards her younger brother and mother as characters in another story. Through it, she objectively understands events in the story and even her own behaviour. It also demonstrates that she is dreaming of her sentimental story and simultaneously understanding it objectively. In addition, when Dorian breaks with Sibyl, he says:

> There is always something ridiculous about the emotions of people whom one has ceased to love. Sibyl Vane to him seemed to be absurdly melodramatic. Her tears and sobs annoyed him.[28]

At this point, we may say that Sibyl, who regarded her younger brother's words as melodramatic, is described from yet another perspective. Dorian defines her objectively as melodramatic. The melodramatic mood in the episode between Dorian and Sibyl is criticised several times externally by both. Similarly, the different moods in the story provide the reader with an external perspective. For example, in the scene where Jim has a meal at their house, their room is described:

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[27] *ibid.*, p. 61.
[28] *ibid.*, p. 73.

> The flies buzzed round the table, and crawled over the stained cloth. Through the rumble of omnibuses, and the clatter of street-cabs, he could hear the droning voice devouring each minute that was left to him.[29]

This writing lets the reader objectively understand why Sibyl calls Dorian "Prince Charming".[30] In fact, through the external viewpoints and the different moods in the story, not only the characters and the reader may objectively understand the preceding moods.

The dark second half of this novel perhaps has a similar effect on a larger scale. After Sibyl's suicide, Dorian establishes himself as a hedonist without depending on Henry's aphorisms. He no longer grieves for her death. By contrast, he appears to be a person who tempts young people to corruption. Moreover, he knows that his portrait is getting old and ugly, reflecting his disgraced life in the second half of the novel. In Chapter 12, he invites Basil to his house to show him the portrait, and in the following chapter, they look at it together. We may argue that Dorian in this episode was devilish. Firstly, looking at his face in the picture, he deplores the proof of his sin. Then Basil repeatedly asks Dorian to pray with him for God's forgiveness. However, "suddenly uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward came over him."[31] After that, Dorian "rushed at him, and dug the knife into the great vein that is behind the ear, crushing the man's head down on the table, and stabbing again and again."[32] It is possible that at this moment, he goes completely to the dark side, to the opposite world of the society described in the first half of this novel. It can be said that the axis of the story has shifted to the dark side, and he criticises fashionable society from the external viewpoint of the dark side. At that time, Henry cannot escape from criticism. He still uses aphorisms and makes accusations against paradoxical situations in society, especially in the aristocratic world. However, in front of a murderer, Dorian, I think his words carry less weight and become merely jokes. As the plot progresses, the reader may find that Henry's role is becoming less and less important. We can argue that it is caused by the fact that Dorian moves into the dark side and acquires the

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[29] *ibid.*, p. 61.
[30] *ibid.*, p. 59.
[31] *ibid.*, p. 117.
[32] *loc. cit.*

external viewpoint of the dark side. We can argue that the layered structure created by the author brought this about.

These methods pile up many layers in the story. The unnamed book which appears in Chapter 11 exemplifies this structure. At the beginning of this chapter one finds, "For years, Dorian Gray could not free himself from the influence of this book."[33] Nishimura Kōji conjectures that Wilde originally gave this book a fanciful title.[34] In the existing form, it does not have a proper title, but it is generally said that this book is *À Rebours* [Against the Grain] (1884) by Joris Karl Huysmans (1848-1907).[35] This is the story of a strange gentleman who dislikes the actual world and who builds a mansion and fills it with many works of art. It is said that this novel was influenced by *Les Paradis artificiels* [Artificial Paradises] (1860) by Charles Baudelaire (1821-67). The important point is that the reader can find that *À Rebours* must be the untitled book in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. In addition, it is also significant that the reader can find the layered structure here. In fact, there is the hero who is attracted by the book as a projection of *À Rebours*, and beyond him, we can see the author who was fascinated by Huysmans' book. These constructions perhaps represent the layered structure which can be found in many parts of the novel.

Moreover, the contents of this chapter itself has links with that of *À Rebours*. Des Esseintes, the hero of *À Rebours*, loves works of art by great artists such as Baudelaire, Mallarmé and Wagner. In Huysmans' novel, his taste for art is described endlessly. In Chapter 11 of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, to introduce Dorian's hobby, there are also many references to perfumes, jewels and pieces of embroidery. It was published only six years after Huysmans' novel. This similarity was probably enough to remind the reader of *À Rebours*. There is one more important point to be made about these references. As Isobel Murray says in "Explanatory

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[33] *ibid.*, p. 97.
[34] Nishimura Kōji, "Kaidai" [Bibliographical Note], Nishimura Kōji (ed.), *O. Wairudo zenshū* [The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde], Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Seidosha, 1988), p. 471.
[35] Aoyagi Kōichi introduces Wilde's visit to Paris with his wife, Constance, on their honeymoon only a few months later than publishing *À Rebours*. In the interview by the journalist, he appreciated Huysmans' book. Aoyagi Kōichi, "Joris Karl Huysmans", Yamada (ed.), *Osukā Wairudo jiten*, p. 429. In addition, in his letter to E. W. Pratt, Wilde wrote that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* "is partly suggested by Huysmans's *A Rebours*"; *Letters*, p. 524.

Notes" in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, each reference has its source,[36] and their connections are quite direct. For example, according to her, some adjectives for the jewels in this chapter were already used in exactly the same way in *Precious Stones* (1882) by A. H. Church, and some episodes about the jewels clearly come from *History and Mystery of Precious Stones* (1880) by William Jones. The examples of embroidery in this chapter are also taken from *Embroidery and Lace: Their Manufacture and History from the Remotest Antiquity to the Present Day* (1888) by Ernest Lefébure, translated by Alan S. Cole. I believe that these quotations from other books are too obvious to be hidden. The reader may easily find them. Wilde even reviewed Lefébure's book and wrote an appreciation of it in *The Woman's World* in November 1888 which he himself edited. It can be said that he attempted to make other layered structures between his novel and other books which he quoted in his work. In other words, reading his novel, the reader also read other books. I believe that he clearly showed this to the reader by using direct quotations.

When one considers these facts, it is certain that he intentionally presented this chapter as a collection of various themes with a layered structure. Wilde's words in his letter, "My story [*The Picture of Dorian Gray*] is an essay on decorative art,"[37] reinforces this interpretation. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* was not only a novel which developed a plot, but also a collection of critical essays about works of art. In this chapter, references to Roman Catholicism, mysticism and "the materialistic doctrines of the *Darwinismus* movement"[38] are also made. They also reinforce the idea of this chapter as a collection. In respect of the development of the plot, this chapter is regarded as a turning point between a positive and negative mood. After this chapter, the dark side of Dorian's personality gradually takes over. In fact, the author shows the reader its nature as a multilayered novel including various themes in such an important chapter. I think that it is very significant. This chapter can be considered a watershed in the story, symbolising the nature of the whole novel.

Regarding the influence by other works, some similarities can be found in other points. For example, Wilde's work describes the detachment of the soul from the

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[36] Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Isobel Murray (ed.) (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 245-6.
[37] *Letters*, p. 436.
[38] Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Works*, p. 101.

body and the separation of one personality into two characters. It is certainly related to works such as *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-94) and *William Wilson* (1839) by Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49). In addition, as stated in Chapter 2 of this thesis, there are many similarities with *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) by Charles Robert Maturin (1782-1824) who was Wilde's great-uncle. For instance, in Chapter 1 of *Melmoth the Wanderer*, the hero sees the portrait of his ancestor, Melmoth. This atrocious man makes a contract with the devil and is given a lifespan of 150 years. It is possible that when Wilde wrote *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, he was influenced by this. Moreover, at the end of the story, Melmoth rapidly grows old because of the end of the contract with the devil. We may say that the depiction of this ugly and pitiful old man is similar to that of the dead Dorian. Wilde seemed to have written *The Picture of Dorian Gray* with these novels in mind. He did not hide the similarities between his work and other works. These works were too popular to hide, and the similarities too clear. If anything, I think Wilde positively reminded the reader of these works. As Wilde quoted some writings from other works in Chapter 11, this also can be interpreted in the same way.

As analysed in Chapter 11, through the external viewpoints and the quotation from other works, Wilde created the layered structure. What is brought out by this structure should be investigated. In this work with a layered structure, sometimes, the development of the plot stops for a long time and, on other occasions, goes off in another direction. Perhaps this is caused by the excessive number of themes. They are thrown into the story and create their own moods. However, it does not mean that they are arranged at random. We can argue that each theme presents something which contradicts the preceding one. One code of values is thrown into relief by the next. For example, the decadent mood in Chapter 1 changes into that of a romantic love story by a tale of tragic love of Dorian's mother in the consequent chapter. Then it is followed by the impression of a social novel which deals with the protagonists' political stance and poverty in the East End. In other words, these different moods always contrast with each other and give another objective viewpoint. In addition, because of the obvious quotations from other works and the clear use of the framework of other stories, the reader may also be given another viewpoint. In fact, when they

remember other books, they leave the world of the novel and analyse the novel from outside its world. Therefore, through the layered structure, I believe that Wilde criticised a code of values from another objective viewpoint. We may say that this is the main reason that the story does not develop smoothly.

Why did he adopt this complicated structure, even at the sacrifice of the smooth development of the novel? What did he intend to describe? Through the analysis described in the former parts of this thesis, one of the answers can be found. Through the complicated, layered structure, I think he hoped to describe the complexities of human nature in the intricate world. Many values cannot be standardised by force. This was one of his principles from his pluralistic viewpoint. The situation is probably found even in one person. Depending upon conditions, one's stance may change, and one may think differently. Through the layered structure, Wilde perhaps intended to describe human nature as a totality in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. To describe the complexities of human nature, the characters are given different natures. In his letter to Ralph Payne in 1894, Wilde says:

> it [*The Picture of Dorian Gray*] contains much of me in it. Basil Hallward is what I think I am: Lord Henry what the world thinks me: Dorian what I would like to be – in other ages, perhaps.[39]

These words are related to his aim in this novel. His personality is divided into these three characters. In other words, when they are studied together, Wilde emerges as an actual person with many sides to his personality.

Each theme and each mood are located in the story and combine in it. However, simultaneously, they maintain their independence. Therefore, through the contrasts between them, they contribute to throwing other themes and moods into relief. The only connection of different themes and moods is Dorian's spiritual development in the development of the plot. However, as was said above, this is not straightforward. In a multilayered novel, he cannot help stopping and going off another direction. At one stage, he enjoys his youth and beauty, on other occasions, he is tormented by a feeling of guilt and takes shelter in his hobby. His code of values always fluctuates. We can argue that this is also the general human condition. In

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[39] *Letters*, p. 585.

different phases in the external world and in one's inner world, one loses one's way and wanders back and forth. It is possible that this is an aspect of human life. We find the same in Wilde's life. He suffered from dichotomies, such as between Irish and English, and Catholicism and Protestantism. As his attitude towards the suit between Ruskin and Whistler demonstrates to us, he agonised constantly about different codes of value. Like the title of his great-uncle's work, he wandered in a labyrinth of the totality.

This novel demonstrates different values through different moods. However, each value is criticised from another viewpoint later in the novel. As a result, the reader cannot hold any of them steadily. When the reader tries to grasp the crux of the story, it always slips through their fingers like a fugue. At the beginning of this section, the two interpretations were introduced. One can regard this novel as both moral and immoral at the same time. Perhaps this ambivalence comes from the intended vagueness of the story. I believe that Wilde attempted to let the reader wander amongst different codes of values in the multilayered novel, because that is how human nature was perceived by his pluralism. This is the reason why he adopted the multilayered structure, and Wilde intended to describe human nature through it.

6.3. Anxiety Arising from Pluralism: *Salomé* (1893)

Based on his pluralism, Wilde intended to describe the complexities of human nature in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. This can also be found in *Salomé* which left a strong impression on the twelve-year-old Mishima. As stated in Chapter 1, in this play each character has a distinct personality. The seductiveness of Salomé, the lust of Herod and the materialism of Herodias can easily be pointed out. Moreover, Jokanaan's purity and holiness is deeply involved in their drama, and the subordinate story of the Young Syrian and the Page of Herodias is closely interwoven in the main story. Although this play is a one-act play and is not long, the stage is enriched with the strong personalities. It is possible that because of the dance of the seven veils and the shocking scene where the heroine kisses a severed head, the impression given by *Salomé* is more immoral than *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. It has already been said that when Mishima first read this play, he was twelve years old. About twenty years later, Mishima, recalling his first impression of it, says:

> After returning home, I read it. I felt a shock as if I were struck by lightning. I thought that this was indeed a book for adults. Evil was left to take its own course, and sensuality and beauty were released. There was no threadbare sermon, anywhere.[40]

We may argue that the young Mishima found and was attracted by the adult atmosphere in the play. However, according to the quotation above, it is also true that he sensed Wilde's intention to describe the many sides of human nature. As was said in Chapter 1, at the time when he first read this play, he had a habit of indulging in illusions. In the pre-war period, he enjoyed his illusions mainly set in the world of Japanese classics. According to his writings in this time, he did not care much about the actual world where he lived. In fact, he did not yet worry about the gap between worldly reality and his illusions. They could co-exist simultaneously. It can be called his immature thinking, but can also be seen to be multilayered thinking. Also, young people generally dislike any limits being placed on their ideas and actions by their elders. Consequently, we may say that Mishima, who enjoyed illusion more than

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[40] Mishima, "Radige ni tsukarete", *Works* 27, p. 211.

others, unconsciously perceived an affinity between his multilayered approach and this play. In addition, when Mishima wrote the quotation above, it was the big issue for him to break away from his illusion and to take part in post-war life. This was dealt with in Chapter 3, in the conflict between the external being and the inner being in *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. He struggled with it. Thus, he probably remembered his young days nostalgically with a little scorn for himself. Mishima seemed to understand Wilde's intention in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. For example, Mishima comments on the works including different elements without a straightforward structure, "mud churned up by the footsteps of his talent".[41] Moreover, he appreciates that Jean Cocteau (1889-1963) understood various themes such as Anti-Hedonism and Anti-Hellenism in Wilde's novel.[42] Perhaps Mishima's understanding of Wilde's works was demonstrated by his first impression of *Salomé*. I think that the young Mishima intuitively pierced straight to the core of Wilde's philosophy and felt at peace with his illusions. He found that *Salomé* described human nature from different points of view and guaranteed the right for him to indulge in illusion. After this initial impression, what did he perceive most strongly about this work? In this section, the influence of *Salomé* on Mishima in his youth will be investigated, and also Mishima's understanding of Wilde's stance.

In 1939, Mishima's first play was published in the magazine of his school. Its title is "Higashi no hakase tachi" [The Wise Men from the East]. This play has never been performed, but he studied old documents in detail to write it. It is possible that he devoted all his energy to writing this one-act play. The setting of this play is the roof of Herod's palace. Herod, the king of Judah, is afraid of the rumour that a new king will come. He is dogged by nightmares. Although he pursues pleasure, he cannot attain peace. At that time, three wise men come to see Herod. They predict that a new king will be born at Bethlehem and banish Herod from Judah. In the final scene of the play, Herod is terrified at the idea of a new-born king and makes a plan to kill all new-born babies there. This work was written only two years after Mishima first read *Salomé*. Amongst Mishima's works, there are few which are directly related to the Bible. Consequently, we can argue that this play was strongly influenced by Wilde's

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[41] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 337.
[42] *loc. cit.*

Salomé. Mishima added an explanation about this play in the magazine and stated that he acquired his material from Chapter 2 of the Gospel of Matthew. This chapter also has a reference to Salomé. This reinforces the influence of *Salomé* on this play. I think it is necessary to note that Mishima describes the discomfort of the ruler in this play. In Chapter 1, I analysed *Salomé* as a play concerned with the theme of dominance. Mishima's intention in this play had something to do with this theme. In *Salomé*, Herod, the tetrarch of Judah, is afraid of his position as a dominator being taken over by the moon and orders Salomé to be killed because of his fear. As Dōmoto Masaki points out, Herod's discomfort in Mishima's play perhaps reflected the coming of World War II.[43] However, it can also be considered as general anxiety deep down within himself.

To clarify this point, I will investigate another work of his which deals with a subject from the Bible, "Gyōshō seika" [Hymns at the Morning Bell] (1939). This work is based on the episode in the Bible when Jesus was fasting and Satan tempted him three times. The development of the story follows the original. Satan finds that Jesus is fasting. He transforms himself into a young woman then into an exalted personage and orders Jesus to change stones into bread. However, Jesus does not obey him. Finally, he orders Jesus to cast himself from the roof of the temple to prove that he is the Son of God. Then Satan is defeated by Jesus and leaves him. Sakita Susumu indicates the similarity between Mishima's description of the colour of Satan's lips and Jokanaan's in *Salomé*.[44] However, another point in Mishima's play should be focused on. It is also a short work dealing with the theme of dominance. In the work, Satan is afraid of Jesus, because he will threaten his position. He must think that he has to eliminate Jesus before the latter establishes Himself as the Son of God. At the beginning of this story, Mishima says, "[This work comes] From Chapter 4 of Luke's Gospel" and includes some parts of the English translation of Luke (4:1-13).[45] Moreover, thinking of the fact that he wrote this work in the year following his first reading of *Salomé*, it is certain that this short story was strongly influenced by his

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[43] Dōmoto Masaki, *Mishima Yukio no engeki: Makugire no shisō* [Dramas by Mishima Yukio: The Thought of Curtain Fall] (Tokyo: Gekishobō, 1977)
[44] Sakita Susumu, "Mishima Yuikio to Osukā Wairudo" [Mishima Yukio and Oscar Wilde], *Nihon bungei ronkō*, Vol. 7, March 1977 (Sendai: Tōhoku Daigaku Bungei Danwakai, 1977), pp.5-6.
[45] Mshima, "Gyōshō seika", *Works* 1, p. 49.

understanding of *Salomé*. In addition, I think it is also significant that Mishima wrote this work through Satan's perspective. I believe that the theme of this short story is the anxiety of the dominator as well as "Higashi no hakase tachi".

This theme increases in importance when we examine Mishima's subsequent work, "Yakata" [The Mansion] (1939). This is the story of a cruel duke who executes thieves and enjoys it. Mishima had intended to write it in serial form, but it was incomplete. Its archaic language and heavy use of Japanese characters, *hiragana*, may remind the reader of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's works and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's. They were modern Japanese writers whom Mishima liked. However, its Western setting was probably more influenced by Wilde. In addition, Mishima used a page-boy as the narrator of this story. This role of the page can be regarded as another influence from Wilde's *Salomé*. This page says that the duke looks bold and strong but actually he is nervous and timid. We can argue that it is an important point. In his works, which had been greatly influenced by Wilde's *Salomé*, Mishima again describes the anxiety of the dominator.

As was said in Chapter 1 and previously in this section, Mishima considered *Salomé* a play which addresses the theme of dominance. Consequently, anxiety, which he described in his works influenced by Wilde's *Salomé*, was probably the mood of Herod, the tetrarch of Judah. Ogling his stepdaughter, Salomé, he is afraid that the strong power of the moon may take over his position as the dominator. As well as *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Wilde wrote *Salomé* as a work with different points of view because of his pluralism. In the case of *Salomé*, he was more conscious of criticism from viewpoints outside the plot such as the moon symbolising the author, the audience and the reader. As stated at the beginning of this section, each character represents a different aspect of the many complexities of human nature. Therefore, as the three main characters in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* show, some aspects of Wilde's very complex nature can also be reflected in the character of Herod in *Salomé*. The moon as the author has great power and demonstrates Wilde's desire to manipulate others. It has a close connection with Herod's fear of being dominated by others. Wilde and Herod both hoped to be the master because of their fear of being

controlled by someone else. Thus, it can be said that the moon and Herod are two sides of the same coin and represent the author, Wilde.

However, on the other hand, perhaps Wilde also thought that it was unavoidable to be dominated and to rely on something. I think the reason for this thinking was strongly related to his way of description in his works. Because of his pluralism, he intended to describe people from different viewpoints. He believed that in the human mind, different ideas co-existed and mixed with each other. Moreover, as stated, Wilde defined art as being of a multifaceted nature. Without any prejudice and distinction, people can encounter beauty and create new kinds of beauty through their contact with beauty represented in works of art. In that process, everyone and everything can become beautiful. His works such as *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Salomé* were designed to express this idea of his. Because of this, these works have a layered structure. Like the characters in these works, the reader meets different ideas. However, because of this, it is also true that these works created disjointed impressions. Although the reader can easily see various ideas from different perspectives, I think s/he cannot find a clear, consistent basis to analyse the whole novel. As stated, when the reader finds the decadent mood created by Henry's aphorisms, it is interrupted by the romantic mood created by the tragic love-story of Dorian's mother. Then cutting into it is the impression of a social novel. These different layers bring in other themes and throw into relief the various moods created in the novel. Moreover, although Sibyl is a character in the melodrama with Dorian, from another viewpoint, she objectively criticises her mother and younger brother as characters in a melodrama. Then Dorian condemns Sibyl as a mere character in a melodrama from another external perspective. In addition, these themes in the first half were objectively criticised in the dark second half of the novel. Amongst the repeated varied criticism, the reader may not have a consistent code of values, on which to base his interpretation. As a consequence, s/he may be left with various codes of values, in the same way as the characters are.

I think that this situation was similar to that of the author. Wilde attempted to describe the complexity of human nature using the layered structure. As a result, he also did not have a steady code of values. When he published *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, reviews varied from critic to critic. They ranged from praise to censure. This

reflected Wilde's oscillation and proved that his intention to describe the complexities of human nature as a whole had succeeded. However, he must have been afraid that he had lost his direction in his layered works. It means that he was torn by different kinds of beauty through various codes of values in his pluralism. If he had followed one code of values, it would have led him to the negation of others. I believe that his fear of being ruled by others was caused by this. For instance, in "The Preface" of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, he says:

> There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book.
> Books are well written, or badly written. That is all.[46]

This aphorism was an answer to the critics who criticised his novel as an outrageous work. However, it also can be regarded as words to persuade himself. It is possible that he felt anxiety arising from his pluralism and needed clear values to rely on. If he was shown it by others, it means that he was dominated by others who had specific codes of values. It ran counter to his pluralism. However, although he was terrified of it, at the same time, he hoped to be shown it. Even it meant being dominated, he was anxious for a constant code of values. We can find evidence for this in the moon in *Salomé*. It symbolises two things. One is the existence who controls himself and others with unshakeable self-confidence. The other is Wilde's longing and craving for the mighty dominator. Therefore, he probably needed to describe the moon as a strong dominator. Mishima perceived this instability and ambivalence of dominance in Wilde's *Salomé* and reflected this in his works written after his first reading of *Salomé*.

Standing in the tensions between poles, such as Ireland and England, and Catholicism and Protestantism, Wilde arrived at his multifaceted view of art. The conflict between Whistler and Ruskin, which started from their lawsuit, had contributed to forming this belief of his. Although Whistler aimed to open up his works to people, as a result, they became increasingly abstract. His works became less clearly representative of the painter's intention, and made more difficult the general observers' appreciation. Then he defiantly declared that only painters could

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[46] Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Works*, p. 17.

understand art.[47] On the other hand, Ruskin's attitude was based on his Puritanism and was quite clear on the point of morality. However, it ran the risk of becoming narrow and excluding ideas contrary to his. Between these two poles, Wilde was not able to follow either. Therefore, he looked for a way to include all principles. The layered structure in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* demonstrates to us his views of art and deals with the complexity of human nature. He intended to describe humans in all their complexity. However, in his multilayered works, I believe that he lost his way. Amongst various kinds of beauty, the code of values, which he should have had, became unclear. The desire to control everything and others and longing for the strong dominator were mixed deep within himself. *Salomé* was written by Wilde with these ideas about dominance in mind. They are represented by the relationship between Herod and the moon in the play. We may argue that these contradictory ideas show Wilde as a person with many sides to his personality. Joseph Donohoe says that Wilde's heretical dramaturgy is based on "one ultimately expressive of the man himself".[48] This statement probably refers to this point. Describing Dorian's drifting amongst different values and different viewpoints, Wilde lost a firm code of values. All that he could do was sway between opposite poles. His depiction of the moon as a dominator with great power shows his hope of maintaining his identity with a solid code of values for self-determination. On the other hand, Herod's anxiety, which comes from being deprived of his power by the moon, also demonstrates Wilde's fear. Amongst these different values, he lost his way in his pluralism. Anxiety arising from pluralism was his final position before his imprisonment for homosexuality. At this point, his view of the Absolute may appear. In fact, he perhaps began to seriously consider the Absolute as a resolution to the complex set of relationships that had developed throughout his life.

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[47] James McNeill Whistler, "Mr. Whistler's 'Ten O' Clock'", *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (London: Heinemann, 1994), p. 144.
[48] Joseph Donohoe, "Distance, death and desire in *Salomé*", Raby (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Oscar Wilde*, p. 137.

Chapter 7. Mishima: From Dualism to his Final Position

In his critical essay, in the form of a letter to the Japanese crown prince, Mishima introduces "The Happy Prince" (1952) as follows:

> I think that Your Highness will know the sentimental fairy tale, "The Happy Prince". In that story, the statue of a prince, who lived in comfort at the palace, sympathises with the poor. He asks the swallow to be his bearer and presents it with the gold of his decorations and the jewels of his eyes. Compared with the nineteenth century, today is not such a sentimental period, when miserable people can be saved by tears and a small amount of personal jewels. It is not the way for Your Highness to go out to save the poor by individual sentimentalism. The only way to discharge Your Highness' duty as a human being seems to be to walk the lonely way of the crown prince as well as possible.[1]

Horie Tamaki points out that Mishima regarded "The Happy Prince" as a mere story in "the sentimental period".[2] However, Mishima's words in this quotation were not a criticism of Wilde's whole way of life. If anything, although this quotation was written after his break with Wilde in "Osukā Wairudo ron" (1950), it shows the reader his unchanging interest in Wilde. Using the plot of "The Happy Prince" as an example, he says that Wilde's idea in the story does not go along with his philosophy. He tried to face up to the post-war period not in an actual and practical way but in a more spiritual one. In *Kyōko no ie*, Mishima sought involvement with worldly reality in the post-war period. In this context, it will be investigated how he developed his dualism through his understanding of the anxiety that Wilde found arising from his pluralism.

Mishima's final work, *Hōjō no umi*, is a tetralogy. The hero transmigrates from one story to the next, and a commentator observes each episode. The stories are entitled *Haru no yuki* [Spring Snow], *Honba* [Runaway Horses], *Akatsuki no tera* [The Temple of Dawn] and *Tennin gosui* [The Decay of the Angel], and all of them appeared in the monthly magazine, *Shinchō* (1965-71). It is said that the final manuscript of this tetralogy was handed to the editor on the morning of Mishima's

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[1] Mishima, "Saikō no gizensha to shite – Kōtaishi denka e no tegami", *Works* 26, p. 156.
[2] Horie Tamaki, "Mishima Yukio to Wairudo – Horobi no bigaku" [Mishima Yukio and Wilde: The Aesthetic of the Fall], Nihon Hikaku Bungakukai (ed.), *Horobi to ikyō no hikaku bunka* [Cross-Cultural Survey on the Fall and the Foreign Countries] (Tokyo: Shibunkakushuppan, 1994), p. 36.

suicide, *harakiri*, at Fort Ichigaya, Part of the Self-Defence Forces complex.[3] This fact, and the quality and the quantity of the tetralogy demonstrate that this work can be called his masterpiece. According to Mushiake Aromu's report, in Mishima's letter to Shimizu Fumio, who was Mishima's teacher in his junior and senior high school, Mishima says, "I asked the members of my family and the publishers not to say to me the words, 'After writing this work...' The end of this work means the end of this world for me."[4] In addition, he also states in another work, "[At last I will start writing] the novel to understand this world. I have been thinking that I became a writer to write this kind of work."[5] These facts demonstrate that this work fits the title of his masterpiece into which he poured all his ideas.

Therefore, it addresses various, important issues for Mishima. It has been analysed in a variety of ways, but the position of this tetralogy in Japanese literary history has not yet been determined by critics. We find this in the discussion which was held between Miyoshi Yukio, Matsumoto Tōru and Tsuge Teruhiko in 1981.[6] In this chapter, how the theme introduced in his works after the end of World War II and after visiting Greece, developed will be investigated first of all. Some important issues for him such as illusion and worldly reality in the post-war period will be clarified. Then his dualism will be examined in connection with *vijñaptimātratā*, which is one of the doctrines of Mahāyāna Buddhism. These analyses will demonstrate his final stance.

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[3] Kojima Chikako, *Mishima Yukio to Dan Kazuo* [Mishima Yukio and Dan Kazuo] (Tokyo: Kōsōsha, 1980), p. 8.
[4] Mushiake Aromu, "*Hōjō no umi* ni tsuite" [On *The Sea of Fertility*], the leaflet, *Geppō* [The Monthly Report] for *Works* 18, p. 11.
[5] Mishima, "*Hōjō no umi* ni tsuite", *Works* 34, p. 27. First published in *the Mainichi Shinbun* [The Mainichi Newspaper], 26 February 1969 (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1969).
[6] Miyoshi Yukio, Matsumoto Tōru and Tsuge Teruhiko, "Kyōdōtōgi: Mishima Yukio wo yomu" [Discussion: Reading Mishima Yukio], *Kokubungaku*, July 1981 (Tokyo: Gakutōsha, 1981), p. 6.

7.1. Transcendence and Mutability: *Spring Snow* (1965) and *Runaway Horses* (1967)

The setting of the first story, *Spring Snow*, is in the Taishō period (1912-26), and this long tetralogy begins in the first year of this period. The hero, Matsugae Kiyoaki, an eighteen-year-old high school student, is not someone with an unusual sense of beauty like the heroes in *Confessions of a Mask* and *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. He is not a man of physical vigour. He is an able student, the son of an aristocratic family. However, he is a very private character. He does not live in a students' house and regards only Honda Shigekuni as his friend. He also complains about being categorised into the same group as other students, the youth of the Taishō period, by elder people. Because of this idea which can be called elitist, Kiyoaki is very proud. We can argue that this is a tendency which can be found in the main characters in *Kyōko no ie*. Kiyoaki's pride and solitude lead to him having various illusions. His notebook entitled "The Diary of Dream" also demonstrates that he is in the habit of having illusion. This is the record of his dreams, and he records his dreams in as much detail as possible. In that diary, some symbolic dreams, such as living in the tropics, being a woman and being in prison, are reported. Transmigration, which occurs in the following stories of the tetralogy, traces these dreams of his. It is very important that each story of transmigration begins with his dreams. This fact will be dealt with again in the next section.

It is probable that, compared with the imaginative Kiyoaki, the heroine, Ayakura Satoko, is described as a contrasting character. She is two years older than Kiyoaki. Her family is also aristocratic, and Kiyoaki and Satoko have known each other since they were small children. Unlike Kiyoaki, she does not shut herself up in illusion. She shows her yearning for Kiyoaki. When Kiyoaki takes two princes of Thailand to the imperial theatre in Tokyo, she willingly accepts Kiyoaki's invitation and goes to see the play with him. Moreover, on a snowy morning, she asks him to play truant and to take her to see the snow. They are a son of a marquis and a daughter of a count, and he is still a high school student. Judging from these facts and their social status, this suggestion was certainly reckless. It can be said that she is an impetuous and impulsive character. However, her attitude towards Kiyoaki, who

reluctantly agrees with her suggestion, is quite obedient. Her forceful attitude is not evident in the scene where they go out in the snow. As was said, Kiyoaki secretly looks down on others. On the contrary, Satoko acts confidently, but hides her delicate inner feelings.

In this episode, in the rickshaw, they kiss for the first time. There is a sentence, "As he moved his hands over her body, touching first her earlobe, then her breast, the softness under his fingers excited him."[7] He is surprised at his first touch of a woman's body. It is perhaps his first contact with the external world in an actual form. He realises the response of the body. I think that it is an unfamiliar experience for Kiyoaki who lives in illusion. The following sentences are found in this scene, "Suddenly he understood. What he really wanted to do was to challenge the world."[8] These clarify the hero's position. It is already indicated in Chapter 3 that illusion brings out in the hero a kind of alienation. In *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, the hero tries to accord with worldly reality by being involved with women or by burning the Golden Temple. The main characters in *Kyōko no ie* attempt to get rid of illusion and also to seek a point of contact with the post-war period. In the case of Kiyoaki, his contact with worldly reality appears in the form of affection for Satoko. There is one point which demands attention. Mishima says the motif of the first story is purity and calm.[9] Consequently, although it is certain that Kiyoaki comes into contact with worldly reality through his love for Satoko, he probably does not have any plan to use their love as a tool to find the point of contact with worldly reality.

However, when Kiyoaki realises his affection for Satoko, it has already been decided that Satoko will marry a member of the imperial family. For this purpose, she is learning the etiquette of the palace and the customs of the imperial family. Both Count Ayakura and the imperial family value protocol and honour above everything. It is impossible for them to cancel the engagement between Prince Harunori and Satoko. Because of his self-esteem, Kiyoaki had not responded to Satoko's yearning for him. It is too late for him to understand his honest emotions for her. After that, he makes up his mind to recapture her. Perhaps Kiyoaki cannot stop dreaming any situation. As a

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[7] Mishima, *Spring Snow*, p. 89.
[8] *ibid.*, p. 90.
[9] Mishima Yukiko, "*Hōjō no umi* nōto" [Notes for *The Sea of Fertility*], *Shinchō*, January 1971, Rinji zōkangō [Special Edition] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1971), p. 70.

result, when one of his illusions is broken, he invites other illusions. This plan of recapturing her can be called another illusion caused by breaking his illusion of his love for Satoko. The more impossible the fulfilment of his illusion is, the purer his illusion becomes, like a miracle in heaven. Kiyoaki thinks:

> elegance disregards prohibitions, even the most severe. [...]
> "Now at last, I'm sure that I do love Satoko," he told himself. And the impossibility of fulfilling that love was proof enough that he was right in his conviction.[10]

These references also demonstrate the strong connection between him and illusion. Then his only friend, Honda, gradually comes to sympathise with him. Although Honda is a high school student, following the example of his father who is a lawyer, he has already started reading treatises on the law. He is a commentator of this tetralogy, and always watches Kiyoaki calmly. However, only in this case, he is excited about Kiyoaki's words about his decision:

> Honda had managed to surprise himself. He was startled not only by the obscurity of what he had said and the fervor with which he had said it, but also by the admiration he felt for Kiyoaki's wanton disregard of commandment and precept – he, Honda, who had long ago decided to become a man of the law![11]

Perhaps Kiyoaki's sincere love for Satoko awakes Honda's overwhelming desire to ensure that things which may not happen do happen. He believes these things should happen. It is possible that Honda has not known this desire deep down within himself. In this episode, however cool he is usually, he starts having a similar illusion to Kiyoaki's. Then he helps Kiyoaki to see Satoko secretly.

Satoko's marriage is being arranged, it must be celebrated by both clans of the imperial family and Count Ayakura. Generally speaking, and especially according to Japanese custom in that period, it is not good to see in secret a woman who is going to become a bride, particularly in such a prestigious marriage. Kiyoaki's yearning for Satoko is pure, but most may find it socially unacceptable. Without Honda, nobody supports him. Why does Kiyoaki risk his life on this hopeless love? It is certain that his

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[10] Mishima, *Spring Snow*, p. 179.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 195.

elitism has something to do with this. When Kiyoaki confides to Honda his decision to recapture Satoko, Honda says that Kiyoaki is selected to fight in the war of emotion which is the new kind of war in the new period, Taishō. Perhaps this is one of the reasons but it is not the most important one. Kiyoaki appears to accept these words, but it only reinforces his self-esteem. I think the more significant reason is because he is a man.

To explain this answer, it is necessary to refer to his other writing. While Mishima was writing this tetralogy, he also wrote the critical essay, "Shōsetsu to wa nani ka" [What is Fiction?] (1972). In this critical essay, he regards the French novel, *Un beau ténébreux* [A Dark Stranger] by Julien Gracq (1945), as the ideal novel. The hero of this work is a young man. He has the illusion of believing he can go to the outside of this world by the power of sight. In *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* and in *Kyōko no ie* where Mishima analysed the relationship between illusion and worldly reality, people who struggle with illusion are mainly male characters. This is the same as in Gracq's work. Similarly, in *Spring Snow*, the male character, Kiyoaki, has the illusion, and he realises that his friend, Honda, another male character, also longs for illusion. In addition, Iinuma, who is a student and a houseboy in Kiyoaki's house, sympathises with Kiyoaki's living in illusion. In fact, as in some other main works of Mishima's, men in this work more or less have illusion. They are described as people who dream that their illusions rise above this world. Therefore, the reason why Kiyoaki risks his life on hopeless love and challenges impossibility can be interpreted as being simply because he is a man. Conversely speaking, because of being a man, he cannot help having illusion. The difference between him and other men within society is probably only the degree of persisting in illusion.

Men who have illusion hope their illusions separated from this world are fulfilled. When occasion demands, those illusions may become extraordinary, like Kiyoaki's plan to recapture Satoko. On the other hand, what is the meaning of women in this work? In *Spring Snow*, two symbolic episodes are found. One is the scene when Honda goes to court to listen to the trial of an accused involving murder in a love triangle. The defendant is a woman who worked as a waitress at a Japanese-style restaurant. She fraternised with a cook, and they set up house together. However, he had not entered her name in his family register. He chased after more women and

became intimate with another waitress in the same town. The defendant had an eight-year-old illegitimate boy, and he was bullied at school. She asked the other waitress to break with her lover, but the waitress only sneered at her. She then killed the other waitress. It seems that the defendant had robbed herself of the chance to become happy and had also destroyed all that she had built by herself.

The other episode is narrated in the scene where one of the Thai princes introduced a Buddhist tale to Kiyoaki and Honda. The tale is about the bodhisattva's transmigration.[12] The bodhisattva died and "took on another life in the womb of a golden swan. And he carried within him the knowledge that would in due course make him fully aware of his previous existence."[13] He came to realise "that his wife and children were compelled to live with strangers, eking out their existence by doing whatever work they could find."[14] The swan flew to them to give them his golden feathers to help them. However, his wife said, "We can't trust that swan [...] who knows if he might stop coming here one day?"[15] and plucked all of his golden feathers. While she was plucking them, they lost their brightness and never grew again. In this tale, a woman also plays a role in bringing about the defeat of a plan. It can be said that failures are located in the characters of the women in this work. For example, when Satoko secretly sees Kiyoaki after Honda arranged it, she shows the following sentiments. These words of Satoko's to Honda reinforce this analysis about women:

> "You've done all this for his sake, haven't you, Mr. Honda? Kiyo [Kiyoaki's nickname] should think himself the luckiest man in the world to have a friend like you. You see, we women have no real friends at all."[16]

Honda helps the fulfilment of his friend's illusion, even if it is reckless. However, there is no such friendship for women. The reason is perhaps that women do not support the fulfilment of an illusion, but contribute to its disintegration. Satoko is also a woman, thus she plays an unconscious role in accelerating the wreck of illusion. For instance, by becoming pregnant with Kiyoaki's child, she destroys any possibility of

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[12] In Mahāyāna Buddhism, *bodhisattva* means an ascetic who intends to attain enlightenment for himself and for other people.
[13] Mishima, *Spring Snow*, p. 228.
[14] *loc. cit.*
[15] *ibid.*, p. 229.
[16] *ibid.*, p. 241.

marriage into the imperial family. Moreover, accepting an abortion, having her head shaved and becoming a Buddhist nun, she shatters Kiyoaki's illusion. I believe that it is the role of women in this story to shatter men's illusion.

It is possible that this brings out the relationship between women and their bodies. When Honda goes to court and sees the defendant, he finds "a peculiarly intimate correspondence between her body and her crime".[17] As this demonstrates, failure is linked to a woman and her body, so that disintegration is connected to both women in general and to their bodies. The body leaves this world some day. That can be disintegration as death, which lets all things in this world come to nothing. In this work, women exist near disintegration, and the body is mainly their territory. Consequently, we can argue that they embody finitude. They become mothers and send out new bodies. That is to say, they keep producing finitude. The women's hopes in this work persistently stay inside the area of this finitude and are coloured by the atmosphere of this finite world. Eventually, I think they are incompatible with men's illusions which aim to transcend this world. When Kiyoaki first kisses Satoko in the rickshaw in the morning in the *spring snow*, he sees inscrutability in Satoko's white face. We may say that this inscrutability, which Kiyoaki found through the physical contact of a kiss, is this finitude and the meaning of women. I believe that for a dreamer, Kiyoaki, it is difficult to understand.

As was said, for Kiyoaki, having illusion means the same as living. Therefore, it can be said that Satoko's finitude as woman endangers even his existence as a dreamer. After Satoko becomes a Buddhist nun, Kiyoaki grieves over his situation, "Everything has turned sour, I'll never be carried away with joy again. [...] I've been left all alone."[18] He fantasises about Satoko leaving the convent and taking her in his arms. This is a resolution for this barren situation. Then, to prove and confirm his *raison d'être*, he goes to the Gesshū Temple in Kyoto where Satoko is a nun.

His overwhelming desire to make things happen excites him. In addition, the difficulty of his mission seems to guarantee his purity, so he walks confidently. It is possible that, through acquiring a new illusion, Kiyoaki starts again as a man. However, Satoko does not appear in front of him. Confronted by her refusal, he visits

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[17] *ibid.*, p. 204
[18] *ibid.*, p. 356.

every day. At this time, he is troubled with his lungs, and the winter in Kyoto is very harsh with heavy snow. Eventually he has a severe fever, but he continues to visit the temple. However, the old nun who receives him always repeats the same phrase of refusal. While he tries to visit Satoko, perhaps he also finds a kind of heroic joy, so he rejects calling a doctor for himself. Then he has the illusion that a drastic change happens at the temple, and that Satoko is prepared to see him. He also fancies that, in spite of the snow, if he goes there not in a rickshaw but on foot, he can see her.

In this episode, the strong links with St. Sebastian discussed in Mishima's novel, *Confessions of a Mask* (1950), is found. Sebastian was a Christian martyr in the third century. In both cases, martyrs perceive a marvellous joy in reaching a supreme target. This is also related to the theme of Mishima's short story, "Patriotism" (1961). In that short story, the hero and the heroine commit suicide for the greater justice as a soldier and a soldier's wife. I think that in death they experience a similar joy to Kiyoaki's and St. Sebastian's. These facts demonstrate that this is the important idea in Mishima's philosophy. It also reflects the thinking of Wilde who was attracted by St. Sebastian. It is possible that some of his writings, such as "Happy Prince" and "Nightingale and the Rose" in the *Happy Prince and Other Tales* (1888), demonstrate a similar idea to Mishima's. This will be analysed in the next chapter in detail.

Kiyoaki thinks:

> And then, if I rode all the way to the front door and wasn't able to see Satoko, I'd feel it was my fault. I'd tell myself it was because I was insincere. [...] There's no reason to have such regrets. I have no other choice but to risk my life if I want to see her. To me, she's the essence of beauty. And it's only that which has brought me this far."[19]

It can be said that his thinking expressed above is absolutely pure and that he lives completely in his illusion. However, it can also be said that his thinking lacks consideration for Satoko's situation. When he is on his way there, he catches a chill. Walking to the temple, he starts choking. He falls down on the snow many times and can hardly pass through the gate. When he reaches the porch, he falls down with a bad cough. We may see this as a deadly battle between illusion and disintegration. The nun

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[19] *ibid.*, p. 373.

who is the receptionist is surprised and goes back inside. Then she tells him, "I'm sorry. Your request for a meeting cannot be granted."[20] Honda comes to Kyoto to help Kiyoaki, but his efforts are fruitless. Kiyoaki's hope to see Satoko has not been fulfilled, and he catches only a serious illness. Then "Two days after his return to Tokyo, Kiyoaki Matsugae died at the age of twenty."[21] Kiyoaki risks his life because of his affection for Satoko and intends to fulfil his great hope as illusion. Then, as a result of his love for Satoko, he probably touches worldly reality as disintegration. On the other hand, we can argue that Satoko wrecks his illusion at the final stage. She is a woman and symbolises finitude. We may say that, in the face of her refusal, his life disappears, and his illusion melts away like the *spring snow*, the title of this story. I believe that illusion is defeated by the finitude.

To write the second story of this tetralogy, entitled *Runaway Horses*, the author "jumps time and space"[22] by transmigration. The second story starts in 1932. At that time, Honda, Kiyoaki's friend, is 38 years old, and becomes a junior associate judge of the Osaka Court of Appeals. In those days, the damage to crops from cold weather was quite serious, and famine and the sale of daughters were becoming great social problems.

In June, Honda visits the Japanese fencing [*kendō*] tournament at the Ōmiwa Shrine in Nara Prefecture on behalf of the Chief Justice. After the tournament, he climbs up the holy mountain. The mountain trail is very hard for him, and the rain the day before has made it slippery. The sunshine in early summer is also hard, and the sweat is pouring off him:

> Honda was soaked with sweat and panting for breath. It was the intoxicating force of such harsh mortification, he supposed, that prepared a man for the mystery that he was approaching. That indeed was a divine law.[23]

Although the season is different, Honda's climb seems to trace Kiyoaki's painful visits to the Gesshū temple in the final part of the first story, *Spring Snow*. I think it is a good introduction to the following story. Kiyoaki wants to see Satoko at his journey's end.

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[20] *ibid.*, p. 376.
[21] *ibid.*, p. 389.
[22] Mishima, "Mishima Yukio: Saigo no kotoba", *Works Appendix,* Volume 1, p. 700.
[23] Mishima, *Runaway Horses*, p. 37.

The reader may expect that Honda will meet an important character at the end of his journey. At the holy place on the mountain, Honda sees one young man amongst others who perform their ablutions under the waterfall. That man, who fought aggressively in the Japanese fencing tournament, is Iinuma Isao. He is the son of Iinuma Shigeyuki who was a houseboy in Kiyoaki's house and is a right-wing thinker. Honda feels a happy affinity to Isao. However, when he finds a cluster of three small moles on the left side of Isao's belly, he shudders. That was also on Kiyoaki, and his last words were, "I'll see you again. I know it. Beneath the falls."[24]

Isao, a student at the College of National Studies, longs for the League of the Divine Wind. This was a Shinto group which revolted against the Westernism of the government in Kumamoto Prefecture in the early Meiji period. They devoted themselves to the Japanese Emperor and tried to eliminate unscrupulous men who had great influence in the political and financial world. They regarded these retainers as the black clouds covering the Empire. However, their desperate attack using their Japanese swords was defeated by the government army with great force, and their uprising was subdued in only one day. Almost all of them were killed in the uprising, and the remainder killed themselves by *harakiri*, facing the rising sun on the hill. Isao transposes the social conditions from the Meiji period, when the revolt of the League of the Divine Wind happened, to the early Shōwa period of his lifetime. Then he attributes the causes of the social problems of his day, such as hunger in farm villages and monopoly of the economic benefits of wealth, to the wicked vassals surrounding the Emperor. He thinks that the youth have to rise up to get rid of this poison. He also believes that, accomplishing the Shōwa restoration, young people have to establish the national polity [*kokutai*] where the Emperor's love can reach the length and breadth of the nation. He also regards his members and himself as the cornerstones and sacrificial stones for this reform. Isao collects the members, who have the same ambition as himself, and calls them *The Shōwa League of the Divine Wind.* As compared with Kiyoaki's illusion, it can be said that Isao's hope, which follows the belief of the League of the Divine Wind, has the social perspective. In opposition to Kiyoaki's quite private illusion, although it is radical, Isao's hope offers a wider viewpoint.

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[24] Mishima, *Spring Snow*, p. 389.

However, I think it is certain that Kiyoaki and Isao do not have completely different personalities. As Kiyoaki is a solitary and alienated person living in an illusion, Isao is also alienated and isolated from the established order of society. His purity as a traditional Japanese man probably does not suggest to him how he can get along in life. He also does not permit himself to compromise with society. Apart from their alienation, their common traits can be pointed out. Isao's purpose is the creation of the new social system with the Emperor as the leader not for his benefit but for that of all Japanese. He believes that it is the true national polity of Japan. Although their purposes are different, we may say that this sincere purity is the same as Kiyoaki's desire to ensure that things which may not happen do happen.

However, in my opinion, there is one point where they are entirely different. Kiyoaki first despises other ordinary young people, and as a result of his affection for Satoko, he wishes to conform to the Taishō period as a selected fighter in the war of the emotion in the new period. That is regarded as his illusion. Contrary to Kiyoaki's hopes, Isao has no hope of becoming part of the Shōwa period. Conversely, he attempts to draw the Shōwa period towards him and to make it suit him. It can be called his illusion, the Shōwa restoration. In fact, Kiyoaki tries to adjust to the mood of the new period, but Isao tries to change the prevalent mood of the period. I believe that Kiyoaki and Isao both attempt to resolve their alienation, but their means of doing so are poles apart. With a similar desire to Kiyoaki, Isao takes action for his extraordinary aim which is to change the social system drastically. His idea is perhaps close to the concept of consistency of thought and action according to the Neo-Confucian doctrine of Wang Yangming. This will be examined in Chapter 8.

In the first story of this tetralogy, women appear as symbols of disintegration. How are they described in this story? A heroine appears in the story. Her name is Kitō Makiko, and she is thirty two or thirty three years old. She has divorced her husband and comes back to her father's house. She is beautiful, but she always has an expression of grief on her face. Her father is an ex-serviceman and a famous poet. Makiko also writes poems. Makiko and her father become fond of Isao and the members of the group and enjoy inviting them to their house.

Isao is making a detailed plan of the Shōwa restoration with other members. He carefully selects some who are especially keen to execute the plan.

Renting a flat under a false name, they have many meetings. Their plans include an attack on substations, the assassination of important people of the political and financial world, the occupation of the Bank of Japan and distribution of anti-government handbills. Through these actions, they are planning to proclaim martial law in the capital city, Tokyo. However, the army officers who communicate secretly with them tell Isao they will not participate. Knowing that they cannot acquire armaments from the army, many members drop out from the group. The remaining members, including Isao, confine their plan to the assassinations. Three days before carrying out the plan, he visits Makiko's house and says good-bye to her within his mind. Makiko guesses and understands the situation. She makes him promise to bring the sacred lilies, tomorrow. However, their plan is betrayed, and Isao and other members of the group are arrested.

The trial starts and the cross-examinations take place. During them, Honda, who volunteers to be a counsel for them for no payment, calls Makiko as a witness. She says that three days before their uprising, Isao visited her and testifies with her diary as follows:

> The story that came out from my question was as follows: Without Isao's having been aware of it, the direction of his group's activities had gotten altogether out of hand, and the truth of the matter was that each of those involved, to hide his own fears and to measure the courage of the group, had grown ever more violently vocal, and as the numbers increased of those who fell away because this bravado unnerved them, the handful who remained bluffed all the harder. And while their actual resolution grew ever weaker, their words and their plans kept mounting toward a fantastic bloody retribution. They no longer knew what to do with each other. [...] "Thanks to you, I feel good again. I have no intention of going through with it. As soon as I find the chance, I'll tell everyone that it's off." He laughed cheerfully when he said this and so I was somewhat relieved.[25]

It is clear to the reader and Isao himself that she is committing perjury. By her testimony, people had misunderstood that Isao betrayed other members who swear to rise in revolt. In addition, people may think that the person who informs on their plans to the police, is Isao. Unfortunately, Isao is in a prison cell and is forbidden to talk in private at court. Therefore, he does not have any opportunity to explain it to the other

[25] Adapted with minor corrections from Gallagher tr. Mishima, *Runaway Horses*, pp. 380-1.

members. Moreover, it is probable that although this testimony contributes to a commutation of punishment, it affronts their wishes. Without any reward, they were prepared to risk their lives on the uprising and the creation of the new social system with the Emperor as the leader. However, by Makiko's testimony, their ideas and the purity of their motives are called into question. We can argue that even Honda, who trusts Makiko and calls her, is also at her mercy. He intends to fight by fair means and to show people their pure spirit. However, after Makiko's testimony, the only way to an acquittal is by playing cheap tricks.

However, it can be said that Makiko's testimony does not come from spite. It comes from her maternal and feminine love wishing to save Isao from serious punishment. She also risks being accused of perjury herself. I think this fact assures us of her unselfish purpose. However, as a result, she unconsciously arouses people's suspicion of the pure motives of Isao and the other members. I believe that it is a woman's tragedy that she can show her affection only in this way. The person who betrays their plan to others is Makiko. In the second story, *Runaway Horses*, we can argue that women represent disintegration of this finite world, again.

To regain their purity which has been lost by Makiko's testimony and, at the same time, to avoid Makiko being accused of perjury, Isao answers in court:

> I had been letting her know something of my thoughts, I wanted to prevent her from becoming involved in any way whatsoever in the aftermath of our action. Therefore I deliberately acted as though my nerve had failed, and, in order to make her believe that, I told her nothing but lies. I wanted to see her gravely disappointed in me …and, by that means, break off my – attachment. Everything I said to her that night was a lie. She was completely taken in.[26]

Listening to Isao's words, Honda "applauded the desperate means".[27] Isao protects the purity of their motives and their actions without bringing punishment on Makiko. I regard this as men's hard battle against the finitude brought about by women.

In *Spring Snow*, the hero, Kiyoaki, has an illusion, and in *Runaway Horses*, the protagonist, Isao, tries to accomplish his pure aim through action. How is man's nature described in the male characters? On the other hand, the heroine, Satoko,

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[26] *ibid.*, p. 388.
[27] *loc. cit.*

destroys Kiyoaki's illusion in *Spring Snow*, and Makiko attempts to prevent Isao fulfilling his aim in *Runaway Horses*. What kind of woman's nature do the female characters symbolise? To find the answers for these questions, the next quotation is helpful. When Isao is given a chance for the final answer in court, he says as follows:

> If we look on idly, heaven and earth will never be joined. To join heaven and earth, some decisive deed of purity is necessary. To accomplish so resolute an action, you have to stake your life, giving no thought to personal gain or loss. You have to turn into a dragon and stir up a whirlwind, tear the dark, brooding clouds asunder and soar up into the azure-blue sky.[28]

"Heaven and earth" must be a metaphor for the Emperor and people. He says that to connect them to each other without any impurity, Isao and his members rise in revolt against the social system. Isao's speeches in the story are always logical and clear. However, as this quotation demonstrates, we can find that the basis of Isao's aim and action includes something insecure and vague. Since he expects change and reform in the future, it is perhaps inevitable, because change includes images in future. This is similar to Kiyoaki's illusion which is frequently divorced from the real world. In fact, it can be said that they are eager to transcend worldly reality. As in the first story, the male characters have illusion and dream that their illusions rise above this world. I define having illusion and desire to change as transcendence, and transcendence is part of man's nature in *Hōjō no umi*. In this work, man seeks his hopes in the future as an unknown area. Transcendence is also the nature of illusion or the action in Mishima's works discussed in the previous chapters.

On the contrary, woman's nature is close to disintegration of transcendence. In the works analysed in this chapter, women exist with an earthly code of values. As formerly stated, in Mishima's works, women's thoughts and actions are based primarily on the needs of their finite bodies. A large number of women bear numerous babies which symbolise finitude. We may say that the repetition of finitude links with mutability [*mujō*]. Therefore, I define mutability as woman's nature in *Hōjō no umi*. In this work, woman is involved with man's nature through disintegration. They are the cause of the disintegration of men's illusion. Infinitely repetitive disintegration forms mutability. I believe that transcendence and mutability are two

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[28] *ibid.*, p. 394.

main themes which flow through Mishima's works. In this tetralogy, his final work, we may find that these two main themes clearly emerge.

As for this issue, there is an episode where Isao talks with the investigator at the police station after his arrest. He asks the investigator to torture him. It can be interpreted that he is afraid that his aim is becoming free from worldly reality. Therefore, he probably wishes to reinforce the insecure parts of his transcendence by the touch of his body as the closest worldly reality to him. However, if his suggestion is accepted, I think it is doubtful that his aim is accomplished. The reason is that the body as worldly reality is the woman's area, and it is impossible for transcendence to include mutability.

Isao is handed the verdict, innocent. This is because of the fact that they are young, and their motives were quite pure. After returning home, he says to his mother, "I've lived for the sake of an illusion. I've patterned my life upon an illusion. And this punishment has come on me because of this illusion... [...] If I were a woman, I could live without chasing after illusions."[29] This quotation can be called the sad whisper of a man who has transcendence whose disintegration is brought about by a woman.

However, he does not give up. On the evening when the ceremonies are held for the naming of the Crown Prince, he alone invades the mansion of Kurahara Busuke, an influential person of the financial world. He stabs Kurahara with a short Japanese sword. It is one year after their original plan and a solitary action. I believe that it also symbolises the desperate resistance of man's transcendence against woman's mutability. Then, eluding his pursuers, he reaches the top of a cliff facing the sea. As the members of the League of the Divine Wind in the Meiji period did, Isao has been hoping to kill himself by *harakiri* while looking up at the rising sun. However, the sun has not yet risen, and he cannot wait for it. He kills himself under the night sky:

> Isao drew in a deep breath and shut his eyes as he ran his left hand caressingly over his stomach. Grasping the knife with his right hand, he pressed its point against his body, and guided it to the correct place with the fingertips of his left hand. Then, with a powerful thrust of his arm, he plunged the knife into his

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[29] *ibid.*, p. 409.

> stomach. The instant that the blade tore open his flesh, the bright disk of the sun soared up and exploded behind his eyelids.[30]

This is the final episode of this story. He succeeds in assassinating one of the godfathers of the financial world and dies under a bright sun. It is possible that his action fulfils his illusion about the reform of society. However, after his death, nothing changes in Japan, and the bringing about of the national polity which Isao aims for is still far away. It must be said that transcendence of Isao's pure actions and aims are defeated by mutability in this story as well as in the first story.

These setbacks for the hero clarify Mishima's stance when he wrote about them. As analysed in the previous chapters, there was a dichotomy in Mishima's consciousness. In his philosophy, illusion and worldly reality are contradictory to each other. Mishima did not permit himself to be enclosed in illusion and intended to join worldly reality. This is probably symbolised in Kiyoaki's story in *Spring Snow*. Although he is rejected, he continues to visit the temple until his death. We can argue that this effort is similar to Mishima's. Since *The Sound of Waves*, he had been seeking a way to resolve the dichotomy between worldly reality and illusion as conflicting elements in his works such as *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* and *Kyōko no ie*. However, as Kiyoaki's story demonstrates, it is quite difficult. Then he perhaps attempts to draw worldly reality to his framework. This means to embody his illusion in the period when he lives. Perhaps Mishima dreamed of circumstances where worldly reality connects with illusion without any obstacle, as in "Patriotism". What is depicted in Isao's story in *Runaway Horses* seemed to be Mishima's struggle against the post-war period. It includes a challenge to society, and in this point he was parallel to Wilde who criticised the English social system in the nineteenth century. I think that Mishima understood Wilde's criticism and challenged the ordained system. This will be examined in the next chapter. In the process, in the first half of this tetralogy Mishima assigned illusion and worldly reality to both men and women. In this way, those ideas are clarified. In fact, the dichotomy appears as the conflict between transcendence and mutability. It is also probable that, through transcendence being the common nature of men, the solidarity of brothers is brought out between men. Perhaps this idea led to Mishima's homosexuality. In *Spring Snow* and *Runaway Horses*,

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[30] *ibid.*, p. 421.

Mishima described the defeat of transcendence in the conflict against mutability. What is the next step for him? I understand that he brought it out in the idea of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This will be examined in the next section.

7.2. Understanding *Vijñaptimātratā*: *The Temple of Dawn* (1968) and *The Decay of the Angel* (1970)

Mishima planned to write the first story, *Spring Snow*, as "a love story" and the second, *Runaway Horses*, as "a story with the theme of action and the motives behind it". In contrast with them, he defined the third, *The Temple of Dawn*, as "a psychological story".[31] This story is divided into two parts. The first part is an account of Honda's trip to Thailand and India, and the second is the story of transmigration, which succeeds the first and the second story.

In the first part of *The Temple of Dawn*, Honda meets Princess Ying Chan which means Princess of Moonlight. Although she is a member of the Thai royal family, she has been insisting that she is a Japanese woman. Honda remembers Kiyoaki's writing about being a woman in "The Diary of Dream". Honda doubts that Kiyoaki has transmigrated into this little princess who continues with her strange assertion. Moreover, in *Runaway Horses*, Isao dreamily says to his mother that he hopes to be reborn a woman, and not have to chase after illusion, and he leaves the following words, "Far to the south. Very hot...in the rose sunshine of a southern land..."[32] Honda finds a cluster of three small moles on the left side of Isao's belly. It is also on Kiyoaki, and, because of this, Honda is certain that Kiyoaki is reborn as Isao. However, Honda cannot find the same on Ying Chan.

In the first part, in Thailand and India, we can interpret that Honda thinks of the conflict between transcendence which men including him have, and mutability which women have. Because of the decline of Buddhism there, the cave temples at Ajantā, India, are now ruins. Before visiting the temples, Honda perceives, "he felt he had perhaps never expected an Absolute in Buddhism. In the tranquillity of the homecoming he had dreamed of, he felt an unremitting closeness to what was gradually perishing."[33] I think this quotation obviously demonstrates Honda's position. It is clear that mutability is penetrating into him before he realises it. Honda lived with Kiyoaki, and was moved by Isao's seriousness. He is forty-seven years old in the first

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[31] Mishima, "*Hōjō no umi* nōto", *Shinchō*, January 1971, Rinji zōkangō, p. 70.
[32] Mishima, *Runaway Horses*, p. 409.
[33] Mishima, *The Temple of Dawn*, p. 74.

part of this story. To succeed as a lawyer, he learns how to swim with the current. Sometimes he looks back at Kiyoaki and Isao objectively. It seems that this distance between them and Honda is not irrelevant to penetration of mutability into him. In addition, when he visits Benares, a Hindu holy place located near the river Ganges, we can find one symbolic scene. He sees a sacred white cow and thinks by the crematorium:

> The white belly reflecting the flickering flames appeared like cold Himalayan snow bathed in moonlight. It was a pure synthesis of impassible snow and sublime flesh in the body of an animal. The flames were smoke-logged; sometimes flashes of red dominated, again to be hidden by the swirling smoke.
>
> Just then the sacred cow turned its majestic white face to Honda through the vague smoke rising from the burning bodies and looked directly at him.[34]

This cow is consecrated as a messenger from the God. On the other hand, she herself is embarrassed by her fat body. Because of these facts, she perhaps embodies transcendence and mutability. However, her body will gain more weight, thus we can argue that her existence becomes more and more close to mutability rather than transcendence. I think that it is Honda's picture of himself. Although this cow's body shows transcendence and mutability at the same time, she is far away from uniting both. Unlike the daffodil in *Kyōko no ie*, I believe that she is eroded by mutability and conquered by it. When Honda meets the cow's eyes, perhaps he perceives his own position through this cow.

For dealing with this perception, the meaning of transmigration in *vijñaptimātratā* seems to become more and more important, because it brings out another meaning of death which is the greatest disintegration for a human being. As was said at the beginning of this section, in the first part of *The Temple of Dawn*, the author lets Honda investigate *vijñaptimātratā*. It is one of the fundamental philosophies in Mahāyāna Buddhism. This part has a great deal of terminology and is not easy to understand. However, Mishima says, "If I did not show readers the philosophy of transmigration at that part, it would be impossible to understand the later story."[35] It is probable that *vijñaptimātratā* is the key to understanding this tetralogy.

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[34] *ibid.*, pp. 67-8.
[35] Mishima, "Mishima Yukio: Saigo no kotoba", *Works Appendix*, Volume 1, p. 700.

Some remarkable studies have been completed on the subject of *vijñaptimātratā* in this work. For example, Inoue Takashi refers to the change in the role of *vijñaptimātratā* in *Hōjō no umi* and traces how the process is swallowed up by solipsism.[36] In addition, Takahashi Shigemi arranges the references to *vijñaptimātratā* in this tetralogy and clarifies the division between literature and Buddhism.[37] Moreover, Tsushima Katsutoshi analyses the protagonists' birthdays in this tetralogy and regards *vijñaptimātratā* as only a trick to lead the readers to misread it.[38] However, I think that it is also important to understand correctly the concept of *vijñaptimātratā* and to analyse Mishima's peculiar interpretation. It is useful not only to understand this tetralogy but also investigate his final position which is the aim of this chapter. Firstly, how *vijñaptimātratā* was understood by Mishima will be investigated in this section.

Mishima shows an overview of Mahāyāna Buddhism and explains *vijñaptimātratā* in *The Temple of Dawn*. It can be said that his understanding of *vijñaptimātratā* is almost correct. As Mishima says, in *vijñaptimātratā* everything is categorised into two groups: *ātman*, which means ego as the agent of perception, and *dharma*, or that which is recognised as existing materially in this world by *ātman*. They are defined as not existing except in one's mind (*citta*). What beguiles one into perceiving that something exists outside of the mind is conceptualisation (*vikalpita*). It brings earthly desires. In fact, it is considered that a sense of the existence of things brings greed, hatred and delusion. These earthly desires cause various actions, or karma, and because of one's own desires and karma, one transmigrates in this world of suffering. It is explained as the wheel of life by *vijñaptimātratā*.

In *Hōjō no umi*, Honda develops his understanding of this doctrine and faces one question after returning from his trip to Thailand and India. If *ātman* is merely produced by one's mind, and if *anātman*, negation of the agent, is a natural state, what transmigrates? What is the agent of transmigration? It was disputed from the philosophy of the Upanisads to the early Buddhism (approximately from the

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[36] Inoue Takashi, "*Hōjōo no umi* ni okeru rinnesetsu to yuishiki no mọndai" [Study on Transmigration and *Vijñaptimatrata* in *The Sea of Fertility*], *Kokugo to kokubungaku*, June 1993 (Tokyo, Shibundō, 1993), p. 13.
[37] Takahashi Shigemi, "*Hōjō no umi* ni okeru Mishima Yukio no yuishikikan ni tsuite" [On Mishima Yukio's View of *Vijñaptimatrata* in *The Sea of Fertility*], *Rikkyō daigaku Nihon bungaku*, July 1986 (Tokyo: Rikkyō University, 1986), p. 9.
[38] Tsushima Katsutoshi, *Hōjō no umi ron* [A Treatise on *The Sea of Fertility*] (Tokyo: Kaifūsha, 1988).

seventh century BC to the second century). *Vijñaptimātratā* offers the concept of *ālayavijñāna* as a solution for this question and defines it as the fundamental sense where the agent can be formed.

Vijñaptimātratā takes the viewpoint that all things are transformations of one's mind, and categorises the process of perception into eight groups. The first five are the same as the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. *Manovijñana*, the sixth sense, integrates these five senses and interprets objects. Consequently, earthly desires come from this sixth sense. The seventh sense, which bears *manovijñana* and is located in the unconscious area, is *manas*. Then *ālayavijñāna*, the eighth sense, is defined as being located even deeper within *vijñaptimātratā*. *Ālaya*, the first part of the name of *ālayavijñāna*, originally means a storehouse. It is possible that our daily lives have always been composed of many changes. Physiology may explain this fact as metabolism, which is an organic mechanism, and it can be understood as the rule of the dependence of effect (*phala*) on cause (*hetu*) in *vijñaptimātratā*. Depending on the situation, things in this world become causes or become effects upon each other, and the process is continuous and eternal. The results born from the cause change into *bīja* which means seeds. Then they are stored and ripen (*vāsanā*) in *ālayavijñāna* as the storehouse. When triggered by *pratyaya*, which means affinity, they become the causes and bear the effects again. Mishima compares our daily lives, which always change, to a waterfall:

> Life is active. *Alaya* consciousness functions. This consciousness is the fruit of all rewards, and it stores all seeds that are the results of all activity. Thus that one is living indicates that *alaya* is active.[39]

It is probable that Mishima's ideas shown in the quotation above goes along with the doctrine of *vijñaptimātratā* shown above. Then, at this point, another question appears. This is the question of what this world is. When he started writing this tetralogy, he called it "a novel to understand this world".[40] Thus, this question had great significance for him.

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[39] Adapted with minor corrections from Mishima, *The Temple of Dawn*, p. 120.
[40] Mishima, "*Hōjō no Umi* ni tsuite", *Works* 34, p. 27.

How did Mishima understand this world? I think that investigating this issue through *Hōjō no umi* clarifies his personal understanding, as distinct from the original *vijñaptimātratā*. In *The Temple of Dawn*, Honda knows "Milindapañhā", a tale in the Buddhist Canon. In this tale, King Milinda, who dominated north-western India in the second century BC, asks the Elder, Nagasena, philosophical questions. The King asks, "when I call you Nagasena, exactly who is this Nagasena?" and is conversely asked by Nagasena, "What do you think Nagasena is?"[41] The King lists the various parts of the body as well as mentioning the soul, but all his answers are rejected. The King asks again what the nature of a human being is. Instead of answering, Nagasena asks him what the carriage is, which the King had used to come in. To this question, the King answers that the carriage can come into existence as itself by the relativity of each part such as wheels and axles, and Nagasena judges this answer is correct.

It is probable that the nature of human beings about which the King asks Nagasena, is understood in a similar fashion. In fact, in *vijñaptimātratā*, the nature of a human being is neither situated in the soul nor found in any part of the body. It appears in the relativity of the factors of composition in each element of the human being. What exists deep within human beings is *ālayavijñāna*. This is connected with the concept of transmigration. As mentioned above, both in Mishima's philosophy shown in his work and in *vijñaptimātratā*, this idea about *ālayavijñāna* as the fundamental sense of human beings is the same. According to the theory that everything with no exception is merely the product of the mind, as humans basically originate from *ālayavijñāna*, so the nature of everything is also *ālayavijñāna*.

As was stated above, *ālayavijñāna* is the place where causes (*hetu*) are stored and ripen (*vāsanā*) as seeds (*bīja*), and acquiring affinity (*pratyaya*), they bring effects (*phala*). However, Mishima quoted "Milindapañhā" from the Buddhist Canon, and this tale represents the nature of human beings as relativity. Therefore, we can deduce that Mishima took the viewpoint which focuses on the relativity rather than the storehouse as the nature of *ālayavijñāna*. Cause and effect repeat the endless cycle of birth and death or appearance and disappearance, and this relativity of cause and effect forms *ālayavijñāna*. Mishima seemed to think that this relativity represents the nature

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[41] Mishima, *The Temple of Dawn*, p. 111.

of everything. Fluid *ālayavijñāna*, which is reflected in the human mind, whose nature, in turn, is also *ālayavijñāna* without a stable entity, was the shape of this world of instability for Mishima.

This interpretation of Mishima perhaps invites another question. For example, when a flower blooms, it is perceived only through a change in the mind of the individual. In other words, it only happens in one's mind. However, why do others also perceive that the flower blooms? To answer this question, *vijñaptimātratā* presents the concept of multi-affinity (*adhipati-pratyaya*). According to this concept, the flower's blooming as a work of nature comes not only from the seeds in the perceiver's *ālayavijñāna* but is also influenced by changes in other people's minds. Therefore, we may surmise that *adhipati-pratyaya* has the function opening *ālayavijñāna* up to the external world. According to this concept, cause and effect is networked over the difference between the individual and others. As noted in the analysis of *ālayavijñāna* as the nature of everything, there is no difference between the agent and the object. Therefore, I believe that the individual has relationships with others by *adhipati-pratyaya* and is guaranteed links with the outside world in any situation.

> But then, if we are asleep and if a narcissus is placed in a vase by our pillow during the night, can we prove the existence of the flower at every moment during our sleep?[42]

In *The Temple of Dawn*, the same question is presented, but the concept of *adhipati-pratyaya* does not appear to answer it. The solution is brought about in a completely different way:

> Because only by the existence of the world – world of illusion – is man given the chance of enlightenment.[43]

Here we see his special logic about the reason for the existence of this world, and it is regarded as implausible. In this interpretation, the relationship between the individual

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[42] *ibid.*, p. 125.
[43] *ibid.*, p. 126.

and others cannot be found. Honda calls this logic "the ultimate moral requisite"[44] and verifies that the real state of this world is a collection of *ālayavijñāna*. It is encapsulated in the following words:

> Yet this instantaneous world already dies in the same moment and simultaneously a new one appears. The world which appears one moment is transformed in the following and thus continues on. Everything in the entire world is *alaya* consciousness.[45]

This Honda's perception focuses on the nature of *ālayavijñāna* which exists in mutability as relativity. We may say that this perception comes from the same viewpoint as that of the author, Mishima, when he quotes the tale of "Milindapañhā". In addition, the point of view in this quotation is perhaps similar to that in *Kyōko no ie*. This world exists in innumerable instances of disintegration, and the main characters struggle with this in the work. Moreover, Mishima states, "The idea of present, instant and continual death can be the only idea for me. It is truly vivid and erotic."[46] When one studies the main characters in *Kyōko no ie* and this reference, it seems that this belief of Honda's is quite similar to Mishima's.

In terms of nature, this world is filled with *ālayavijñāna*, and nothing can preserve its existence. The existence of everything depends on changeable relativity. In other words, everything is born and dies in the end. This mutability is the real state of this world. It must emerge for Mishima through *vijñaptimātratā*. This is related to the question of what the agent of transmigration is. The answer gradually appears in the second part of *The Temple of Dawn*. As was stated previously in this section, women represent finitude and mutability in this third story as well as in the first and second. When Ying Chan becomes eighteen years old, she comes to Japan to study. Honda saw her in Thailand, but she has grown up into a very beautiful young lady. Honda succeeds in making an appointment to see her again and tries to return a ring. This emerald ring was the Thai prince's property. When Honda and Kiyoaki went to the Peers School, the prince also went there as an overseas student and had it stolen. Honda finds it by chance in Tokyo after an interval of thirty four years and returns it to

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[44] *loc. cit.*
[45] *ibid.*, p. 128.
[46] Mishima, "Watashi no henreki jidai", *Works* 30, p. 477.

the prince's daughter, Ying Chan. Therefore, it can be said that her wearing that ring means that Kiyoaki and Isao see her after a period of many years. It has a kind of mystic and magical meaning for Honda. However, Ying Chan does not fulfil his expectations. The ring is never put on her finger, and she shamelessly breaks many appointments to see Honda. Finally, she returns the ring to Honda by throwing it at him.

Honda visits Keiko who is a middle-aged woman and his neighbour at his country cottage. She makes friends with Ying Chan. He asks her to tell Ying Chan to wear the ring. Then he kisses Keiko's foot as a pre-condition for doing it. Honda grovels on the carpet without any hesitation:

> Putting his head inside, he found that the mumu was filled with the faint warm fragrance of perfume. Suddenly he was in unknown country. When he raised his eyes after having kissed Keiko's feet, the light was all dark vermilion through the flower print, and two beautiful white columns with pale patterns of veins stood before him. In the distant sky hung a small black sun sending out disheveled black rays.[47]

Honda has formerly looked at transcendence. However, he is at woman's mercy and looks at the woman's finite body as the sun. At this moment, I believe that transcendence is again defeated by mutability. Honda has called a state, "many instances where one could get nothing one wanted and where determination had ultimately been quite futile", "the laws of history".[48] He seems to regard the repetition of disintegration, that is to say the chain of finitude, as "the laws of history". Thinking about human life as an example, I think it is certain that innumerable people repeat a great number of finite events through their birth and death. In "Milindapañhā", Nagasena says that, "time was the existence of samsara itself."[49] Similarly, it is possible that time, which repeats occurrence and disintegration forever, is transmigration itself.

At this stage, it is clear what the agent of transmigration is. All phenomena transmigrate through relativity which is 'transcendence defeated by mutability'. We can argue that this is the true figure of transmigration. Consequently, I believe that the

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[47] Mishima, *The Temple of Dawn*, p. 286.
[48] *ibid.*, p. 20.
[49] *ibid.*, p. 113.

agent of transmigration is relativity which is 'transcendence defeated by mutability'. In *Spring Snow*, hearing Satoko's words, Honda thinks:

> "[...] But...if eternity existed, it would be this moment. And perhaps you, Mr. Honda, will come round to seeing it this way some day."
>
> Honda was at last beginning to understand why Kiyoaki had once been so terribly in awe of Satoko.[50]

Perhaps Kiyoaki instinctively perceived this nature of transmigration and has already understood that his transcendence would be defeated by her mutability.

In *The Temple of Dawn*, Honda doubts whether Ying Chan is a product of transmigration. What does she represent? There are many references to sexual pleasure in the second part. Honda is fifty eight years old in the second part, but his heart throbs with emotion to see the beautiful Ying Chan. He thinks that it is a renewal of his young passion. At a glimpse, it looks like the beginning of a new life in his old body. However, that passion stays strictly within the body. Therefore, I believe that it is different from the one which Honda had before. On the other hand, transmigration is an unrealistic event. Thus, in the early stage of the tetralogy Honda, whose field is logic and the law, struggles with himself because he cannot accept transmigration. In fact, transmigration probably frees one a little from daily life. I think that this is transcendence. This is reinforced by the fact that transmigration in this story traces Kiyoaki's "The Diary of Dreams". Dream is nothing less than transcendence. In addition, although the true figure of transmigration is 'transcendence defeated by mutability', it still has a concept, liberation. (Liberation will be analysed in the next section.) Consequently, we can see simultaneously transcendence and mutability in Ying Chan, because she is considered the product of transmigration and also has a plump body. She conveys two different concepts at the same time. What does this mean? It is probable that transcendence and mutability, which have been portioned out roughly among some characters, start competing with each other in one person. Conflict arises deep within Ying Chan.

However, transcendence and mutability are opposite concepts. They are incompatible with each other. This has already been described in Isao's anxiety in

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[50] Mishima, *Spring Snow*, p. 246.

Runaway Horses. He always feels anxious to free himself from reality and seeks a way to feel certainty through the body. Thus, he asks to be tortured during interrogation in the police station. However, he may not be able to acquire certainty even through torture. Transcendence and mutability cannot exist without each invading the other. Therefore, although Ying Chan conveys them at the same time, one will invade the other. Which invades the other? I think that this is indicated by the fact that Ying Chan is a woman. In fact, the proposition in "The laws of history" that transcendence is defeated by mutability appears here again. There is a fact which demonstrates this. When Ying Chan is a young girl, she passionately emphasises that she is a Japanese woman. However, after growing up, she loses this sense and never repeats it again. This perhaps symbolises that transcendence is defeated by mutability represented by a woman with a plump body. Then she has a lesbian relationship with Keiko. At this stage, her existence is perfectly swallowed up by mutability of the body.

During sexual intercourse with Keiko, a cluster of three small moles, which could not be found before, clearly appears on the left side of Ying Chan's belly. We can argue that transcendence is hounded by mutability and can narrowly be seen in the field of mutability. Transmigration as transcendence, which continues from Kiyoaki and Isao to Ying Chan, is being drowned and made to disappear by mutability. When Ying Chan becomes twenty years old, she is bitten by a cobra in Thailand and dies in the spring. This is how the third story ends.

In the final story of the tetralogy, Honda understands that transmigration, which he has been witnessing since his youth, is vanishing. In the fourth story, *The Decay of the Angel*, he is seventy. After recognising the crisis of transmigration, how does he act?

In 1970, Honda sees a boy, Yasunaga Tōru, whose job is to record the entry of ships at the port town of Shimizu. Honda is interested in this boy who appears to be a little more mature. The reason is that this boy appears to have a great will to achieve his dreams. He is described as "A sixteen-year-old who was quite certain that he did not belong to this world. [...] There were consequently no laws and no regulations that governed him."[51] As was stated in the previous section, Mishima

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[51] Mishima, *The Decay of the Angel*, p. 14.

regards *Un beau ténébreux* by Gracq as a perfect novel in his critical essay, "What is a Fiction?". This is the story of a young man who intends to view this world from the outside and to look down on it. It is probable that a similar idea can be found in Tōru's mind. Perhaps Honda intuitively understands Tōru's wish to be part of an illusion separate from this world. In addition, in respect of his desire to transcend everything in this world, Tōru's wish is stronger than that of Honda. His sole idea is perhaps close to the dream of an egotistic utopia. He has a habit of washing his hands frequently. It seems to demonstrate that he dislikes contact with other people and symbolise this idea.

Although Honda finds that transcendence is defeated by mutability, he seems to *dream* of conquering that law of history. Then encouraged by Tōru's strong desire to dominate others, Honda hopes to ensure transmigration by his own efforts. To let transcendence of Kiyoaki, Isao and Ying Chan exist again in Tōru is probably recapturing the meaning of his life whose nature is transcendence. Then Honda adopts Tōru.

I have already pointed out that in *ālayavijñāna* the agent of transmigration can be formed, and that relativity, which is 'transcendence defeated by mutability', is eternally repeated. *Ālayavijñāna* is also what Honda calls the law of history. Honda understands this in the third story, but he does not accept it. If he does so, the meaning of what he has done and what he will do for transmigration is lost. Honda adopts Tōru and educates him to make him a suitable person to be a successor in transmigration. We can argue that this means the battle between transcendence and mutability in Honda's mind. Honda confirms there is a cluster of three small moles on the left side of Tōru's belly. All Honda hopes for is Tōru's death at the age of twenty, because Kiyoaki, Isao and perhaps Ying Chan die at the age of twenty.

However, in spite of Honda's intention, Tōru begins to show his brutal character through his elitism. He treats Honda very badly. For example, he tears up chrysanthemum flowers, which Honda has tended with the utmost care, cuts down a crepe myrtle tree associated with memories of Honda's youth and hits Honda with a poker. Moreover, around the neighbourhood he spreads the rumour that Honda has become senile and makes up sad stories to gain other people's sympathy. Then Tōru

attempts to have Honda certified as having dementia and to take over Honda's estate. It can be called a plan to create an egoistic utopia by Tōru who has a cold-hearted illusion. Tōru is surely building the foundations to be the new head of the house, but a big change is brought about at the Christmas party at Keiko's house. Keiko tells him the reason why Honda adopted him, namely the secret of transmigration:

> "It's [the reason for adopting Tōru] all very simple. It's because you have three moles on your left chest. [...] Who would be so foolish as to want to adopt a complete stranger on a single meeting just because he had taken a liking? What did you think when we first came with the proposal? We made all sorts of excuses to you and to your superiors, of course. But what did you really think? It puffed you up, I should imagine. People like to think they have their strong points. You thought that your childish dreams and our proposal matched admirably? That your strange childish confidence had been justified? That's what you thought?[52]

These words must be unexpected for Tōru, who believes he is standing on top of the world and looking down on everything with a sense of superiority. Perhaps he is proud of his cleverness and glory in his success in acquiring his present status. However, it is revealed by Keiko's words that he has been able to see nothing. He assumes he has enough talent to be distinguished, but he was adopted not because of his eminent ability but only because of three moles on the left side of his belly. Keiko continues her words, "You thought that history has its exceptions. There are none."[53] We can argue that the law of history is confirmed here. Tōru has an egoistic dream. It can be said to express a strong transcendence. He has used others and stamped them for his success without scruple. However, his strong transcendence is easily unmasked by Keiko as mutability. As a result, it is exposed that his transcendence is only an infantile conceit, and Tōru's value is only the same as his three moles.

Keiko calls him "a mean, cunning little country boy of the sort we see sprawled all over the place".[54] This demonstrates his elitism, because of which he dislikes contact with other people and frequently washes his hands. She also says to him, "There is nothing in the least special about you,"[55] and judges him a fraud. Tōru

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[52] *ibid.*, pp. 200-1.
[53] *ibid.*, p. 201.
[54] *ibid.*, p. 205.
[55] *loc. cit.*

has only a humble conceit. It is impossible that he personifies transmigration, which defies strong mutability. There is probably only one way for Tōru to prove his transcendence. It is to acquire qualifications for reincarnation by dying aged twenty. If he does not die at the age of twenty, he has to kill himself.

In *The Decay of the Angel*, there is an episode involving a mouse. He believes that he is a cat. Mice are eaten by cats, but cats are not eaten by cats. The mouse jumps into the laundry tub and kills himself. This episode can be interpreted as showing that the mouse dies without being eaten by cats; because of this, the mouse may be a cat. This suicide is called "suicide to establish itself"[56] in the work. It is possible that Tōru's trying to commit suicide reflects this. However, he fails and survives. It probably means that he never attains reincarnation as transcendence. After his attempt to commit suicide, Honda cannot find Kiyoaki's Diary of Dream and asks Tōru whether he knows anything about it. He confesses that he burned it before he tried to commit suicide. I think this incident shows us his envy of transmigration as the great transcendence. Because of the poison he took to commit suicide, he loses his sight, and then, wastes his time idly. His existence can be called only a chunk of flesh. We can argue that he is completely deprived of his transcendence and swallowed up by mutability. As was said, Honda intends to embody transmigration by Tōru and let transcendence come face to face with mutability. However, transcendence is again defeated by mutability. As a result, Honda's intention also disintegrates. After Tōru's twenty first birthday, Honda imagines that the possibility of transmigration leaves him, but it still continues somewhere in the vast cosmos. I believe this is his final hope for transcendence.

To reinforce the starting point, Honda goes to the Gesshū Temple in Kyoto. He is planning to see Satoko who is now the Abbess. On the way there, he thinks, "Today I am not going to see skeletons beneath flesh. They are only a concept. I will see and remember things as they are."[57] These words probably mean that he never tries to let transcendence exist by force. He accepts things as themselves. I think it is significant that he visits the Gesshū Temple with this thinking, because the Abbess is a nun and may transcend any sexual distinction. Thus, it can be said that she symbolises

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[56] *ibid.*, p. 119.
[57] *ibid.*, p. 221.

neither a male as transcendence nor a female as mutability. Her position is neutral, and she lives neither as transcendence nor as mutability. In fact, her position seems not to belong to either side and simultaneously to have sufficient purity to become either. Consequently, Honda thinks that she can guarantee him the possibility of his final transcendence. In other words, it is the possibility of continuation of transmigration as transcendence which starts from Kiyoaki. Perhaps Honda plans not to create it by himself but to be given by the Abbess who is in an impartial position. How does the Abbess answer Honda?

> "No, Mr. Honda, I have forgotten none of the blessings that were mine in the other world. But I fear I have never heard the name Kiyoaki Matsugae. Don't you suppose, Mr. Honda, that there never was such a person? You seem convinced that there was; but don't you suppose that there was no such person from the beginning, anywhere? I couldn't help thinking so as I listened to you."
>
> "Why then do we know each other? And the Ayakuras and the Matsugaes must still have family registers."
>
> "Yes, such documents might solve problems in the other world. But did you really know a person called Kiyoaki? And can you say definitely that the two of us have met before?"
>
> "I came here sixty years ago."
>
> "Memory is like a phantom mirror. It sometimes shows things too distant to be seen, and sometimes it shows them as if they were here."
>
> "But if there was no Kiyoaki from the beginning—"
>
> Honda was groping through a fog. His meeting here with the Abbess seemed half a dream. He spoke loudly, as if to retrieve the self that receded like traces of breath vanishing from a lacquer tray. "If there was no Kiyoaki, then there was no Isao. There was no Ying Chan, and who knows, perhaps there has been no I."
>
> For the first time there was strength in her eyes.
>
> "That too is as it is in each heart."[58]

This conversation may surprise not only Honda but also the reader. It overturns the basis of this long tetralogy. When the meaning of this conversation is analysed, the references to "a phantom mirror" perhaps become the key for investigation. The reference to the mirror seems to describe the nature of *ālayavijñāna*. I analyse this as follows. The efforts or intentions of this world always disintegrate. Consequently, the individual disintegration can represent the global one beyond time and space. Similarly, the general disintegration appears in the individual one beyond time and

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[58] *ibid.*, pp. 234-5.

space. For example, for human beings, the ultimate disintegration is death which denies their lives. However, even if someone dies, the world does not change. Even if the world temporally changes in perspective, it returns and goes on as before. The sun rises in the east in the morning and sets in the west, then night comes. Thus, death is considered quite a personal event. However, death surely comes to everyone without any exception. In this respect, someone's individual death can be the manifestation of everyone's death as totality. Similarly, death as totality appears in the individual death. This point closely reflects the Abbess' words, "It sometimes shows things too distant to be seen, and sometimes it shows them as if they were here" in the previous quotation. Satoko's words in the first story, *Spring Snow*, "if eternity existed, it would be this moment," [59] probably refers to the same mechanism. Disintegration which is 'transcendence defeated by mutability' eternally repeats itself, namely, it occurs even here and now. Existence, which swallows separate disintegration such as human death, is *ālayavijñāna*. As stated, the sea, composed of numerous waves representing disintegration, symbolises *ālayavijñāna*. As relativity which is 'transcendence defeated by mutability', *ālayavijñāna* demonstrates us the general and the individual disintegration. I think we can find this in the references to "a phantom mirror".

However, what exists in various kinds of finitude such as human death? It is in the innumerable finitude and in the endless succession of finitude. It must be mutability. In fact, we may say that there is not a neutral area, which belongs neither to transcendence nor to mutability. Therefore I understand as below. *Ālayavijñāna* in *vijñaptimātratā*, which is defined as the centre of this world in this tetralogy, is nothing less than mutability. It is the real state of the external beings represented in the sea of Yura in *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* and that of the real world with uncountable disintegration in *Kyōko no ie*. The transmigration of Kiyoaki, Isao and Ying Chan is *ālayavijñāna*, and Honda's final hope for transcendence is completely shattered by mutability. It is natural that *old* Honda realises it, because he unconsciously comes to accept mutability as the real state of this world through his ageing body and his anxiety about death.

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[59] Mishima, *Spring Snow*, p. 246.

After seeing the Abbess, Honda is guided by a novice and sees the garden of the Gesshū Temple. At that time, he thinks:

> It was a bright, quiet garden, without striking features. Like a rosary rubbed between the hands, the shrilling of cicadas held sway.
>
> There was no other sound. The garden was empty. He had come, thought Honda, to a place that had no memories, nothing.
>
> The noontide sun of summer flowed over the still garden.[60]

Everything melts into mutability as *ālayavijñāna* which is the real state of the real world, and the long story ends. Although there are many waves in the sea of *ālayavijñāna*, which is mutability, they are waves of disintegration. Thus, this sea is a dead sea where all transcendence disintegrates. As the notes in Japanese at the end of the original edition of the first story, *Spring Snow*, show, the title of this tetralogy, *Hōjō no umi*, is "a Japanese translation of the Latin name of the sea in the moon, *Mare Foecunditatis*".[61] No matter the sea in the moon looks fertile from a distance, there are only stones and sand. It probably represents the sea of mutability or the sea of *ālayavijñāna* with lots of disintegration and without any hope of transcendence.

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[60] Mishima, *The Decay of the Angel*, p. 236.

[61] Mishima Yukio, the post note at the end of *Haru no yuki* [Spring Snow], *Works* 18, p. 394.

7.3. Beyond Mutability

The idea that everything is born but disintegrates finally may tempt one to nihilism. Mishima calls taking action to find hope in these difficult circumstances, "Active Nihilism".[62] What were his motives? It is possible that they were related to the aim of ascetic training in *vijñaptimātratā*. The starting-points of *vijñaptimātratā* are being conscious of one's own earthly desires and infatuation, and knowing that nothing can exist outside one's mind. Then a human being as a fast-fading existence dependent on *ālayavijñāna* walks a long road and arrives at the truth (*tathatā*). At that time, the human being is released from the circle of transmigration (*samsāra*). This is liberation (*vimukti*) in *vijñaptimātratā*. To be sure, the number of people who regard liberation as the actual issue must be small. Even in Mishima's case, it is not obvious to what extent he considered liberation a conceivable event. However, although the idea of liberation looks absurd, for Mishima, who understood *vijñaptimātratā* in his unique way, it seemed to be his only hope of not falling into a feeling of emptiness. If anything, because of its absurdity, I think it linked up with the unwitting Mishima's romanticism. In fact, the more he tried to see worldly reality exactly as it was, the more his "disease of romanticism"[63] which seeks something from outside worldly reality, irrepressibly manifested itself.

The idea of liberation goes beyond the succession of finite events, or mutability. Therefore, we may conclude that Mishima did not choose *vijñaptimātratā* for the motif of this novel. Rather, he needed the framework of a novel to describe the phantasmal liberation as a substantial affair. Perhaps the act of writing fiction had become such a second-drawer deed for him, because the words belong to the seventh sense, *manas*. As stated, nothing can exist without one's mind in *vijñaptimātratā*, but *manas* sometimes brings people the delusion that there is an ego as a subject of perception and action. Therefore, the words in the field of *manas* are in danger of diverting one's focus from right understanding of worldly reality. On the contrary, in *vijñaptimātratā*, the body is defined as being connected with the nature of humanity that is found deep down within oneself. Mishima tells of his distrust of words in his

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[62] Mishima, "Shin Fasshizumu ron", *Works* 26, p. 461.
[63] Mishima, "Watashi no henreki jidai", *Works* 30, p. 477.

late works such as his critical essay, "Taiyō to tetsu" [Sun and Steel] appeared in the monthly magazine, *Hihyō*, from 1965 to 1968. It seemed to be affected by his philosophy which was influenced by the beauty of the body in Greek art and his unique understanding of *vijñaptimātratā*.

On the basis of these analyses, the changes to the plot of *Hōjō no umi* will be investigated. Originally Mishima prepared another final scene. In his draft, the plot of the last scene was, "When Honda enters liberation on his death, over the window he sees a boy who is about to sail for the glorious and shining sky."[64] Why was the original plan involving glory changed? On the basis of the statements in this chapter, two reasons can be found. The first is the strength of mutability. What is described in the first story, *Spring Snow*, and the second, *Runaway Horses*, is disintegration of the heroes. In the first, the hero, Kiyoaki, attempts to prevent Satoko from being engaged to a member of the imperial family or from entering a convent. In the second, the hero, Isao, intends to bring about the Shōwa Restoration. The attempts of both of them end in failure. Then, as stated above, in the third, *The Temple of Dawn*, transmigration is absorbed in a woman who symbolises mutability. Moreover, in the final, *The Decay of Angel*, Honda cannot find the true hero. At this time, the state of transmigration is likened to a candle flickering in the wind. We can argue that as compared with the certainty of mutability, which surely exists as a real aspect of this world, the weakness of transcendence is obvious. No matter how much it is a fiction, is it possible for the author to set liberation on that unstable transcendence, to place the characters on it and to let them transcend mutability? As a result, Honda cannot be liberated and is left in "the still garden" in the last scene of the tetralogy. There is a wide gap between the last scene in its present form and the original filled with glory. I have already stated my doubts as to what extent Mishima regarded liberation as an actual event. In this connection, the present development of the plot probably reflects Mishima's inner state, whereby the attraction of liberation was rapidly fading deep down within himself.

Mishima considered wartime "a singular period when my personal eschatology corresponded completely with that of the time and society",[65] and

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[64] Mishima, "*Hōjō no umi* nōto", *Shinchō*, January 1971, Rinji zōkangō, p. 70.
[65] Mishima, "Watashi no henreki jidai", *Works* 30, p. 434.

describes the end of the war as the end of that happiness. He also takes up the same theme immediately before his suicide, "the war was over. When someone promises to see a film with his friend at Hibiya cinema the day after tomorrow, they never doubt whether they can see the film there. In such circumstances, love no longer exists."[66] It can be argued that these references reflect the attitude of the hero of *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. In that work, he regards the post-war period as the eternal repetition of daily life. Thus, I think that for Mishima, liberation from mutability as a succession of finite events implied springing forward so as to miss out the post-war period altogether. However, liberation does not reach the stage where it acquires a concrete image in any work of Mishima's. In Mahāyāna Buddhism whose doctrine is *vijñaptimātratā*, the aim is attaining spiritual enlightenment by studying dogma and doing ascetic practices. In fact, the aim is becoming a Buddha at the ultimate position through liberation. In Mishima's works, no such goal is found. As compared with the harshness of the post-war period with which he had been struggling, I think liberation was only a weak phantom for him.

The second reason for changing the plot is perhaps related to the fact that the concrete state of liberation did not emerge for Mishima. *Vijñaptimātratā* is categorised into Mahāyāna Buddhism, and in that branch the ideal way of life is defined as intending to acquire awakening (*bodhi*) by facing the heavens and helping people's enlightenment through actual activities in this world. Both of these ways are to be pursued at the same time, which may be a warning against seeking enlightenment only for oneself. The ways of life aiming to attain the state of Buddha and hoping to support other people's liberation at the same time are the main ideas of Mahāyāna Buddhism. It leads to the chance to be reborn in heaven as a Buddha.

However, one question presents itself at this point. This way toward Buddha after one's death through other people's redemption brings ascetics to the state of Buddha in heaven. If this is true, should ascetics hope to be reborn in this world where many have been waiting for liberation rather than be reborn in heaven as a Buddha? I think that Mishima also raised this question. *Vijñaptimātratā* answers it by saying that to go on that way to death will induce rebirth in heaven. However, it is clear

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[66] Mishima, "Mishima Yukio: Saigo no kotoba", *Works Appendix*, Volume 1. p. 691.

that a gap is still left between one's own and other people's liberation by one's becoming a Buddha. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, after attaining the state of bodhisattva, one may support other people's liberation as bodhisattva. However, this idea cannot be found in Mishima's works. Consequently, it is probable that liberation resulted only in individual redemption for Mishima. It corresponded neither with the ideas of Mahāyāna Buddhism nor that of *vijñaptimātratā* which regarded everything as products of one's mind and did not permit any distinction between agents and objects. We may say that Mishima's philosophy diverges from *vijñaptimātratā* in this point.

Mishima considered that the real state of this world was mutability and thought that liberation arises from it. However, as was stated above, transmigration displays its weakness in comparison with strong mutability. As a result, liberation does not have the power to transcend mutability and disappears from the plot. I believe that the way left for Mishima was a quest for something which is neither situated in the field of mutability nor swallowed up by mutability. It should not be obscure like liberation and should have a more concrete image. I think that for Mishima it is the Emperor.

As the discussion of Mishima's works in the previous chapters shows, dualism had been formed deep within himself after World War II. It can be said that it was a major theme throughout his writings, such as the body and the spirit in *The Sound of Waves* (1954) and wartime and post-war in *Kyōko no ie* (1959). This dualism produced alienation. Because of the homosexuality in *Confessions of a Mask* (1950) and stammer in *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* (1956), the protagonists are prevented from normal relationships with others. As was discussed, in this final work of Mishima's, *Hōjō no umi*, there is also the dichotomy formed by the main characters. In the first story, Kiyoaki struggles against disintegration caused by Satoko, and in the second, Isao fights against disintegration brought about by Makiko. Their conflicts are between transcendence, including liberation in transmigration, which divorces from this world, and mutability which repeats itself in the repetition of birth and death in this world. In the third story, through understanding *vijñaptimātratā*, Mishima regarded mutability as the real state of this world. In "Patriotism" (1961), Mishima dreamed of dissolving the conflict between illusion and worldly reality. In this

tetralogy, a similar resolution is sought. I believe that the process of bringing about this resolution was planned as follows. Mutability surely exists as the real state of this world. Therefore, some people seek transcendence, otherwise they become nihilists. Transmigration as transcendence is brought out by mutability in this world. In other words, transmigration as transcendence can exist only in this world as mutability. Then transmigration brings out liberation in the repetition of finitude in this world. In this procedure, transcendence and mutability are closely linked to each other, and liberation appears as a resolution for the conflict between them. This was the resolution planned originally for the dichotomy in his final work. However, writing the tetralogy, Mishima realised that, as compared with the certainty of mutability, transcendence was less certain. He also understood that liberation based on transcendence was much more uncertain. Therefore, Mishima could not portray liberation in his work with a concrete image, and it disappears from the plot. In the third story, transmigration is represented by a woman, Ying Chan, who exists as mutability, and in the final story, the hero is only false. Moreover, the Abbess brings transmigration to an end. There is no hope that transmigration may continue somewhere in the vast expanse of space. At this stage, the Emperor, who is part of the outside world, was needed by Mishima. In the process of writing *Hōjō no umi*, I think that the meaning of the Emperor to Mishima became more and more important. This was his final position in his final tetralogy.

Part IV: Conclusion

Because of his pluralism, Wilde believed that art had a multifaceted nature containing different elements. While Wilde was torn between two opposite poles, art included both. However, as shown, Wilde became confused because of the differences between Ruskin's view of art and Whistler's. In fact, in his attempt to avoid prejudice and discrimination, he could not take a stance on a fixed code of values within the multiplicity of ideas. He intended to demonstrate this state in his work, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. It includes many themes and illustrates problems which he found because of dichotomies such as between Ruskin and Whistler. Therefore, in this work, the narrative does not develop in a straightforward fashion, and it is hard to find consistency running from the beginning of the novel to the end. In the layered structure, through criticism from objective viewpoints, the characters cannot develop their philosophy in a consistent way. The reader as well as the characters becomes confused by the multilayered plot. This is also the situation of the author, Wilde. He was anxious for a clear code of values, which he should follow, and longed for someone who could provide it. This anxiety gave rise to *Salomé* as a play concerned with the theme of dominance. The existence which revealed these values to him, was the Absolute, Christ, for Wilde.

On the other hand, Mishima saw anxiety arising from Wilde's pluralism. In his treatise on Wilde, he accuses him of not suffering enough because of his religion and not experiencing the pain of an apostate like Gide.[67] This shows that Mishima partly misunderstood Wilde's position, but it is certain that he did not accept Wilde's pluralism. Mishima stopped indulging in his illusion and attempted to take part in the post-war period as worldly reality. This caused some dichotomies and became the basis of his dualism. In art, he intended to resolve the dichotomies. In *Hōjō no umi*, the dichotomy between transcendence and mutability is described. In the original plot, through the conflict between these concepts, the characters had been led to liberation from the wheel of life. However, in the process of this tetralogy, Mishima found that the nature of this world was mutability. When he was confronted with the certainty of

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[67] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 335.

mutability, the relief of liberation faded away. At this point, the Emperor was the Absolute for him.

They both sought their Absolute. How Mishima understood Wilde's quest and how he pursued the Absolute will show us his attitude towards Wilde. This will be investigated in the next chapter.

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Part V: Similarities, Parallels and Differences

In 1966, four years before his suicide, Mishima published *Sei Sebasuchan no junkyō* [The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian]. This book is a translation of *Le Martyre de Saint Sebastien* (1911) written by Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863-1938). Because of excessive unnatural and artificial use of Japanese, it was badly received by both critics and readers.

However, it deserves to be noted that his interest in St. Sebastian still continued. As stated in Chapter 1, Mishima described the picture of St. Sebastian by Guido Reni (1575-1642) in his novel, *Confessions of a Mask* (1950). The hero is attracted by this picture, and Mishima was also drawn to it. It continued for more than twenty years. It is also well-known that Wilde greatly admired St. Sebastian. For example, he likened his esteemed poet, John Keats (1795-1821), to St. Sebastian in his sonnet, "The Grave of Keats" in *Irish Monthly* (1877). Moreover, when he describes the beauty of a Greek boy in his critical art essay, "The Grosvenor Gallery" in *Dublin University Magazine* (1877), he uses this picture. In *Confessions of a Mask*, the hero places St. Sebastian's death on the same level as the protagonist's death in the final scene of Wilde's "The Fisherman and His Soul" (1891) and celebrates them. Therefore, I think, for Mishima, St. Sebastian was closely linked with Wilde, and his interest in St. Sebastian reflected his interest in Wilde. Perhaps he also had known Wilde's pseudonym, Sebastian Melmoth, after his release from prison. In 1968, two years before his suicide, he posed as St. Sebastian for a photograph in the first issue of the magazine, *Chi to Bara* [Le sang et la rose].[1] Until his death, he probably continued to be very interested in Wilde.

It is true that St. Sebastian is used as a symbol of homosexuality. However, it may be shallow and superficial to regard Wilde and Mishima as being interested in him merely due to their homosexual tendencies. Homosexuality is the device to describe the protagonist's sense of alienation in the post-war period in Mishima's novel and one of the elements of Wilde's pluralism. Thus, it had significant meanings

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[1] "Sei Sebasuchan no junkyō" [The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian], *Chi to bara* [Le sang et la rose], November 1968 (Tokyo: Tenseishuppan, 1968), p. 1. This photo taken by Shinoyama Kishin is one of the series on masculine death whose title is "Otoko no shi" [Les morts masculines].

for them, but was only part of the common factors in their philosophies. In addition, thinking of the final scene in *Spring Snow* by Mishima (1969), the first story in *Hōjō no umi*, and the motives in some fairy tales by Wilde, the pain of Sebastian's martyrdom demonstrate a more important point. I believe that these issues symbolised in St. Sebastian need further analysis.

Both Wilde and Mishima admired St. Sebastian, and Mishima linked him with Wilde. However, their philosophies were not perfectly compatible. As was discussed, both sought the Absolute, like St. Sebastian in his last hours of martyrdom. When we investigate their views of the Absolute, the consequent development of their philosophies can be seen. Perhaps it leads us to an understanding of the similarities, parallels and underlying differences between them.

Chapter 8. The Point of Divergence between these Authors

8.1. Wilde's View of the Absolute: *De Profundis* (1897)

In 1891, Wilde was introduced to Lord Alfred Bruce Douglas (1870-1945) by a poet, Lionel Pigot Johnson (1867-1902), at Wilde's house in London.[2] Douglas was the third son of the ninth Marquess of Queensberry (John Sholto Douglas) and a student of Magdalen College, Oxford. He was called by the nickname, Bosie, and signed intimate letters as Bosie. After Douglas left the university without a degree in 1893, he came to see Wilde frequently. He grew up spoiled, and his selfishness increased as a result of Wilde's tolerance. For example, he visited a flat which Wilde used when he was writing, on many occasions and stayed there for a long time. Moreover, he asked Wilde many times to take him out to expensive restaurants for dinner. In spite of this selfish behaviour, their relationship developed.[3]

Wilde was arrested for this homosexual love and sentenced to two years' hard labour. This was the longest imprisonment on a charge of committing an indecent act at that time. In addition, whether hard labour was imposed was decided by mitigating circumstances. Moreover, in the case of long sentences, the time served was commonly reduced. However, in the case of a two-year term, this was not possible. Thus, this sentence was quite heavy. We can argue that this was the result of the social prejudice against Wilde and homosexuality. For example, in sentencing Wilde, the judge said that Wilde had been "the centre of a circle of extensive corruption of the most hideous kind among young men".[4] However, the male prostitutes who appeared in court as witnesses were professional, so I think it is quite doubtful that Wilde seduced them. One of the influences of social prejudice can be found here.

Wilde was sent to Pentonville and then transferred to Wandsworth on 4 July 1895. He started his life in prison oakum-picking. This was a hard job, and blood always dripped down from his fingers. Forbidden to talk with others, Wilde lived with

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[2] Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde*, p. 306.
[3] For further details of this issue, see Appendix 7.
[4] *ibid.*, p. 448.

poor clothes, meals and sanitary conditions. When he had a fever and could not get up, a doctor came into his cell and said to him without offering any treatment that if he faked illness, he would punish him. After that, Wilde fell unconscious. At that time, he banged his ear against the floor, and he suffered from this injury until his death.[5] He was transferred to Reading Gaol in November 1895. On his way there, on the platform at Clapham Junction, he was laughed at and jeered by many people. This was a hard experience for him, he wrote, "I wept every day at the same hour and for the same space of time," in *De Profundis*.[6] At Reading Gaol, he was called C. 3. 3. and received inhumane treatment just as at Wandsworth. On 3 February 1896, his mother, Speranza, died broken-hearted without seeing her son again. Because of his imprisonment, he disgraced her and brought dishonour to her name. He was proud of his mother, so it is easy to imagine his deep grief. When Speranza died, his wife, Constance, was in Italy to convalesce and to avoid people's attention. However, she probably thought that to inform Wilde personally of Speranza's death was her duty as his wife and she visited Reading despite her illness. This sad interview was their final conversation. She died at Genoa on 7 April 1898. Although her husband had been jailed on charges of indecency, she did not divorce him. Wilde thanked her in his letters for her gentle and kind attitude towards him,[7] so he must have deeply grieved at her death.

As was said above, it is certain that Wilde's life in prison was very sad. However, the chief of Reading Gaol changed in 1897, and conditions in the prison improved. Hygiene and the quality and quantity of meals for prisoners were improved. Wilde's work fortunately changed from oakum-picking to binding. In addition, he was given the privilege of writing. This was probably the result of a plea for commutation by his friends such as Robert Ross (1869-1918) and Frank Harris (1856-1931). It was in these circumstances that Wilde wrote *De Profundis*.

Wilde wrote a long letter to Douglas. It was published as *De Profundis* in 1905 by Robert Ross. However, the story of its publication is complicated. Ross was handed the manuscript by Wilde when he was released and asked to make two typed copies. Then, following Wilde's request, he sent Douglas one of the typed copies.

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[5] Hirai, *Osukā Wairudo no shōgai*, p. 182.
[6] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1040.
[7] *Letters*, pp. 676, 786.

(However, Douglas insisted he never received it.[8]) After Wilde's death, to rehabilitate Wilde as a great artist and to provide for the expenses of bringing up Wilde's two surviving children, Ross published it. This is the 1905 version of *De Profundis*. At that time, he edited out many parts which seemed to cause a problem. For instance, Wilde made serious criticisms of Douglas' extravagance. Consequently, this 1905 version was far from Wilde's original. In 1909, Ross donated the manuscript to the British Library on the condition that it was not made available to the public until fifty years later. After Douglas' death, the complete version was published with a preface by Wilde's second son, Vyvyan Holland, in 1949, but it still had some omissions. This version was based on one of the typed copies which Ross made. Perhaps when Ross had it typed, he omitted some parts consciously or unconsciously. He handed it to Vyvyan. Finally, under the editorship of Rupert Hart-Davis, the true complete version based on Wilde's manuscript was published in 1962.

As the statement, "the two great turning-points of my life were when my father sent me to Oxford, and when society sent me to prison,"[9] demonstrates, imprisonment caused by social prejudice was a highly significant experience for Wilde. In *De Profundis*, written in prison, he examined his ideas and recorded them in detail. It demonstrates both his strength and his weakness as a human being. I think this is the reason that *De Profundis* is a work of great significance. Moreover, in this work, he directly refers to Christ. Therefore, by analysing *De Profundis*, we may know what he thought and what kind of view of the Absolute he developed.

As stated in Chapter 6, as a result of his pluralism, Wilde had lost direction in his life. He swung between the opposite poles of some dichotomies, such as between Ireland and England, or Catholicism and Protestantism. This was described in his multilayered novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. It is quite natural that he needed a solid code of values. This aspiration of his is reflected in *Salomé* as a play concerned with the theme of dominance. Here, Wilde intended to dominate the world like the moon and also longed for such strong power to control the world with a solid code of values. I think this attitude was closely connected to his relationship with Douglas. When we see Wilde's state resulting from this pluralism, it is more understandable

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[8] *ibid.*, p. 683, footnote 1.
[9] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1020.

why he was attracted to this young boy. Hoping to control and to be controlled, he probably aspired to a solid code of values which gave him direction. It is possible that he accepted Douglas as a strong personality who revealed it to him. However, his expectation soon changed into disappointment, and he says in *De Profundis*, "I blame myself for allowing an unintellectual friendship, a friendship whose primary aim was not the creation and contemplation of beautiful things, to entirely dominate my life."[10]

In writing *De Profundis*, Wilde objectively saw Douglas who symbolised a solid code of values for Wilde. This provided him with a deeper pluralistic viewpoint. For example, he confessed that he was interested in "the sunlight side of the garden".[11] In a later section, he regarded this life as "wrong" and "limiting" and required himself to pass on to "the other half of the garden".[12] It can be argued that this is similar to the story of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The first half of the novel mainly describes colourful episodes among the aristocracy, but the second half depicts a dark side of society that throws the first half into relief. Similarly, Wilde acquired a deeper pluralistic viewpoint to see his previous life objectively in "the sunlight side of the garden" from an external viewpoint. Perhaps the background of the improving circumstances in gaol had something to do with this firm way of thinking. The restoration of strength made it possible for him to be grateful. I think this brought out in him hope for relief and rebirth through self-realisation.[13] As for *De Profundis*, Wilde says, "There is in it nothing of rhetoric. Wherever there is erasion or substitution, however slight, however elaborate, it is because I am seeking to render my real impression, to find for my mood its exact equivalent."[14] As compared with his other works such as *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Salomé*, we can argue that this work more directly expresses his personal views. Using this style in *De Profundis*, he described how he achieved his self-realisation. Firstly, I will clarify this point.

De Profundis records his relationship with Douglas. He reports some shocking events which affected both him and Douglas, but his way of doing so is

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[10] *ibid.*, p. 981.
[11] *ibid.*, p. 1026.
[12] *loc. cit.*
[13] In this thesis, based on Wilde's pluralism, self-realisation combines the meanings of self-knowledge and self-fulfilment. This is analysed in the later part of this section.
[14] Wilde, "De Profundis", p. 1051.

unique. He describes them neither objectively nor chronologically. Perhaps, he intentionally chooses facts which cause his hatred for Douglas. For example, he says:

> That all my charming things were to be sold: [...] [whatever] with its beautifully bound editions of my father's and mother's works; its wonderful array of college and school prizes, its *éditions de luxe*, and the like; was absolutely nothing to you. You said it was a great bore: that was all. What you really saw in it was the possibility that your father might ultimately lose a few hundred pounds, and that paltry consideration filled you with ecstatic joy.[15]

> You might even, remembering the sums of money I had lavishly spent on you and how you had lived on me for years, have taken the trouble to buy in some of my books for me. The best all went for less than £150: about as much as I would spend on you in an ordinary week.[16]

In other parts similar to the above, Wilde blames Douglas several times.[17] However, I think we should note that Wilde accuses himself as well as Douglas. At the beginning of the work, he states, "I will begin by telling you that I blame myself terribly."[18] He knew that to let Douglas dominate his life was also his failure. Therefore, when he blames Douglas, it can be said that he also condemns himself for allowing Douglas to control him.

I believe that to list Douglas' terrible conduct was painful for Wilde, because he could not help regretting his friendship with Douglas whilst rebuking himself. Even though the sentence was caused by social prejudice, because of the indecent acts committed by him, he lost much that was precious to him. In particular, he grieves that he made his mother sad and lost his family. Therefore, accusing Douglas brought out deeper sorrow in him. In such sorrow, he says to himself that he has to forgive Douglas. The greater his repentance and sorrow are, the more difficult it is to accept everything and to forgive himself. However, this difficulty perhaps had great significance for Wilde.

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[15] *ibid.*, p. 1003.
[16] *ibid.*, p. 1004.
[17] Wilde's discussion of Douglas' deeds in *De Profundis* may include some factual errors and misunderstanding. Considering Wilde's hard and limited situation in prison, it is understandable. Douglas argued against Wilde's writings in his book such as *Oscar Wilde and Myself* (1914) and *The Autobiography of Lord Alfred Douglas* (1929).
[18] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 981.

As he states elsewhere in the work, "Where there is Sorrow there is holy ground,"[19] it seems to be more meaningful for him to forgive Douglas in such a sorrowful state. Believing that suffering is meaningful, he says, "the first thing that I have got to do is to free myself from any possible bitterness of feeling against you [Douglas];"[20]and, "For my own sake I must forgive you."[21] These words demonstrate that to forgive Douglas was important not only for Douglas but also for Wilde, himself. I believe that through forgiving Douglas, he thought he would return to his proper state and reach a deeper level as a human being. He believed that he was able to develop his talent properly there. Thus, his rebuke for Douglas, especially in the first half of the work, is a manifestation that he decided to aim for self-realisation. We may say that this strong determination of his shows us his making efforts to give meaning to his imprisonment.

At this stage, Wilde's understanding of the way towards self-realisation is clear. I analyse it as follows. There is a state of innocence at first. Then descent comes as the second step. Thirdly it is followed by sorrow. Finally, self-realisation appears with the development of an enriched humanity. These steps can be called a process of the human spirit which is located at the centre of *De Profundis*. In this work, he expects to read beautiful books and then to recreate his creative faculty after his release. He believed that by self-realisation through his special experiences and contemplation in prison, he would be able to write better works than he had done in the past.

We can argue that similar steps towards self-realisation had already appeared in his fairy tales. For example, in his final fairy tale, "The Star-Child" (1891), the Star-Child, found by a kind woodsman, is very beautiful. However, aware of his beauty, he gradually becomes arrogant. When his mother appears as a beggar, he rejects her. At that moment, he becomes ugly and, after that, starts to apologise to her. At the Magician's trial, he understands mercy. He then becomes beautiful again, and his parents, the beggar-woman and the leper, also change into the Queen and the King. We can clearly see the steps discussed. They can also be found in other fairy tales such as "The Happy Prince" (1888), "The Selfish Giant" (1888) and "The Young King" (1891). Therefore, it can be said that the steps had existed deep within himself as a

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[19] *ibid.*, p. 1011.
[20] *ibid.*, p. 1018.
[21] *ibid.*, p. 1017.

fundamental issue for a long time. In other words, as *De Profundis* demonstrates, the steps in these works influenced not only the characters in his short stories but also his actual life.

As for Wilde's fairy tales, in his critique, Christopher Nassaar divided the development of the plots into three steps: innocence, experience and higher innocence.[22] However, I additionally divided *experience* into *descent* and *sorrow* and referred to *higher innocence* as *self-realisation* as shown above. There are two reasons to do so. One is the importance of the different nature of descent and sorrow, and the other is that Wilde was probably conscious of this from his pluralistic viewpoint. He was not merely innocent. In *De Profundis*, Wilde says:

> When Marsyas was 'torn from the scabbard of his limbs' – *dalla vagina delle membre sue*, to use one of Dante's most terrible, most Tacitean phrases – he had no more song, the Greeks said. Apollo had been victor. The lyre had vanquished the reed. But perhaps the Greeks were mistaken. I hear in much modern Art the cry of Marsyas.[23]

This reference reflects his poem, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898). This was first published in the name of C. 3. 3., Wilde's name as a prisoner. In this poem, composed of 109 stanzas in six chapters, the narrator sings about another prisoner who discovers his wife's adultery and kills her. This prisoner is executed, but the narrator believes that after his ordeal, his soul is purified, and he acquires peace of mind. I think that the steps can also be seen here. With reference to this final literary work of his, Wilde states in his letter, "a song of Marsyas, not a song of Apollo".[24] In my opinion, sorrow for Marsyas is essential for his self-realisation.

Moreover, when this issue is analysed, Wilde's words in his poem, "The Burden of Itys" in *Poems* (1881), should be referred to. He sings as follows:

> No more thou wingèd Marsyas complain,
> Apollo loveth not to hear such troubled songs of pain![25]

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[22] Christopher Nassaar, *Into the Demon Universe: A Literary Explanation of Oscar Wilde* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1974).
[23] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1039.
[24] *Letters*, p. 1035.
[25] Oscar Wilde, "The Burden of Itys", *CW,* Volume I, p. 66.

When he wrote this poem, he was a rising poet. He was self-confident. Then anxiety caused by his pluralism invited the friendship with Douglas and allowed Douglas to control him. Afterwards, accusing himself, he sang "a song of Marsyas" in his suffering. We can argue that this contrast based on his introspection demonstrates the significance of his experiences and contemplation in prison. Like the bright and the dark sides in his novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, he acquired a deeper pluralistic viewpoint by his understanding of descent and sorrow through his actual experiences. It clarifies the steps for his self-realisation. He says:

> Of course the sinner must repent. But why? Simply because otherwise he would be unable to realise what he had done. The moment of repentance is the moment of initiation. More than that. It is the means by which one alters one's past. [...] That it was the one thing he could do.[26]

This quotation demonstrates that sorrow played an important role in his mind as the opposite of descent. As analysed above, it can be said that the difference of nature between *descent* and *sorrow* contributed to cultivating his pluralistic viewpoint, and he understood it. This is the reason why I divide the steps into four categories, innocence, descent, sorrow and self-realisation.

One question arises here. I pointed out that, to avoid any discrimination and prejudice, he took a pluralistic viewpoint and accepted various kinds of existence. As a result of this stance, he could not have any clear code of values. Therefore, the deeper pluralistic viewpoint embracing both the bright and the dark sides of his personality made his attempt to find a code of values more complicated. It must lead to greater anxiety arising from his pluralism. How was this problem solved in his philosophy? I believe that this is the point where the Absolute clearly appeared to him.

It is well known that he regards Christ as the ideal in *De Profundis*. Saegusa Kazuko says that the references to Christ in *De Profundis* reflect the brilliance of Wilde's idea.[27] Although her article is quite short and only conveys her subjective impression about *De Profundis*, I agree with her. His understanding of Christ in *De*

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[26] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1037.
[27] Saegusa Kazuko, "Gokuchū no seisho" [The Bible in Prison], *Yuriika* [Eureka], September 1980 (Tokyo: Seidosha, 1980), p. 88.

Profundis can be considered a new development of his philosophy. In the next part, I will analyse it in detail.

Before his imprisonment, Wilde described Christ in his works as a person who leads protagonists to the higher aspects of their spirits. For example, in "The Selfish Giant", the Selfish Giant forces children away from his garden. However, through a young boy who was injured on his hands and feet he realises his selfishness and repents of his wrongdoing. When he dies, he ascends to heaven. This boy is obviously a symbol of Christ. In addition, in "The Young King", the young King knows that people are suffering from having to prepare his beautiful decorations and clothes for the coronation and is ashamed of his behaviour. He attends the ceremony in tatters. The nobles try to catch him. However, in front of the image of Christ, he changes into a noble, glorious king. In both stories, Christ uplifts the heroes' spirits. However, Wilde's interest in Christ developed further in *De Profundis*. His understanding of Christ before this work can be found briefly through his statements in his critical essay, "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" (1891). He says, "When Jesus talks about the poor he simply means people who have not developed their personalities;"[28] and, elsewhere:

> Christ made no attempt to reconstruct society, and consequently the Individualism that he preached to man could be realised only through pain or in solitude. The Ideals that we owe to Christ are the ideals of the man who abandons society entirely, or of the man who resists society absolutely.[29]

According to these quotations, we can say that Wilde was interested in the change of soul brought out by Christ, as a personal issue. In both cases of the Selfish Giant and the young King, Christ influences the heroes' personal changes, it does not spread to other characters. (It is arguable that this point is similar to Mishima's understanding of Mahāyāna Buddhism. As stated in Chapter 7, a gap between individual liberation through attaining the state of Buddha and the hope of supporting other people's liberation was an important theme for him. This issue will be dealt with in the next section.) In the quotation above, Wilde uses the term, "the Individualism". In the context of his critical essay, we may say that it means to develop one's own talent

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[28] Wilde, "The Soul of Man Under Socialism", *Works*, p. 1179.
[29] *ibid.*, pp. 1195-6.

which one has by nature. It is possible that it came from his pluralism and he aimed for it as self-realisation. In "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" and his fairy tales, Christ is mainly related to the theme of self-realisation as personal issues.

However, we can see that in *De Profundis*, Wilde clarifies another aspect of Christ. Wilde regrets that he lost much that was precious to him and, through his sorrow, gains a deeper pluralistic viewpoint. In these circumstances, he says, "I see a far more intimate and immediate connection between the true life of Christ and the true life of the artist."[30] As one of the most significant abilities of an artist, Wilde pointed out imagination in his critical essay, "The Critic as Artist" (1890). We can argue that Christ used this ability and empathised with others experiencing sorrow. In fact, he perceived other people's sorrow as if it were his own and shared it with others. For instance, as Wilde quoted,[31] Isaiah says he was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief", and, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."[32] We can also point out other parts of the Bible as the allied texts. When Laz'a-rus died, Christ wept with others.[33] In addition, Paul states, following Christ's principle, "weep with them that weep."[34] I think this empathy for sorrow is the love which Wilde examines in *De Profundis*. He says, "Love is fed by the imagination, [...] by which, and by which alone, we can understand others in their real as in their ideal relations."[35] Through love, one can meet others and form a bond with them. This is another aspect of Christ which Wilde found in *De Profundis*.

In consideration for others, one can cultivate one's personality and provide others with opportunities to develop their talent. It is possible that this is an ideal situation for self-realisation according to Wilde. In Wilde's case, he understood the power of love in the pluralistic context which was found in his sorrow. I think this is a main point of his statement, "I dare say one has to go to prison to understand it."[36] Therefore, it can be said that, through his experiences and contemplation in prison, other aspects of Christ, attitudes towards others and the significance of love, became clear to Wilde.

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[30] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1027.
[31] *ibid.*, p.1032.
[32] Isaiah (53:3,4).
[33] John (11:1-57).
[34] Romans (12:15).
[35] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 999.
[36] *ibid.*, p. 1037.

As was stated, Wilde could not have a solid code of values in his pluralism and lost direction in his life. However, he found how he could bond with others by the love represented by Christ and what kind of beauty he should aim for by Christ's empathy for other people's sorrow. Christ's life as an artist showed these things to him:

> He [Christ] realised in the entire sphere of human relations that imaginative sympathy which in the sphere of Art is the sole secret of creation. He understood the leprosy of the leper, the darkness of the blind, the fierce misery of those who live for pleasure, the strange poverty of the rich.[37]

Wilde says that empathy formed by the imagining of others' sorrow is love. As he says that in Christ's life "entirely may Sorrow and Beauty be made one",[38] he regarded love as beauty. He understood that to describe in his works such beauty was his self-realisation. Sorrow changes into beauty there. It seems to be closely linked to his feelings of guilt for his success in English society, which was dealt with in Chapter 4. His guilty feelings led him to empathise with the poor and weak. This reminds us of the statement in Luke, "Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh."[39] Perhaps it was also linked to St. Sebastian's beauty at the end of his life. His martyrdom was a tragedy. However, because of his love for God, he bonded with Christ, and his tragedy became the inspiration for beautiful, impelling works of art. After his release, Wilde sang "a song of Marsyas". In *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, when a prisoner is executed, he becomes one with Christ as follows:

> Because the man [the executed prisoner] was one of those
> Whom Christ came down to save.[40]

Moreover, this prisoner also forms a bond with various kinds of people such as those with "alien tears", meaning people who do not know him personally, but cry for him, and "outcast men"[41] in sorrow. Under these circumstances, his death changes into a thing of beauty:

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[37] *ibid.*, p. 1027.
[38] *ibid.*, p. 1029.
[39] Luke (6:21).
[40] Oscar Wilde, "The Ballad of Reading Gaol", *CW,* Volume I, p. 212.
[41] *loc. cit.*

They [the warders] think a murderer's heart would taint
 Each simple seed they sow.
It is not true! God's kindly earth
 Is kindlier than men know,
And the red rose would but blow more red,
 The white rose whiter blow.

Out of his mouth a red, red rose!
 Out of his heart a white![42]

In these quotations, becoming one with Christ and others and changing sorrow into beauty through love are described. As was said, these ideas in prison can be called a new aspect of Wilde's philosophy. I believe that, in this respect, as he stated, imprisonment was a turning point for him as an artist. We can also understand the main theme in the poem through the fact that Wilde asked Michael Davitt to write a preface for it. As stated in Chapter 2, Davitt formed the Land League helped by Fenians and became a leader of the movement. This movement aimed to acquire land-ownership for Irish farmers. He considered the problems of the farmers his own and was imprisoned twice in 1870-7 and 81-2 because of Fenian activities. Therefore, Wilde perhaps believed that he correctly understood the theme in his poem, namely, the mystery that suffering changed into joy through bonding with others in their sorrow in prison.

Through forgiving Douglas although he hated him, he intended to show his love for beauty. This seemed to be the first step for him as an artist after developing a wider pluralistic viewpoint through his experience in prison. He comments as follows:

> People whose desire is solely for self-realisation never know where they are going. [...] But to recognise that the soul of a man is unknowable is the ultimate achievement of Wisdom.[43]

It can be said that this quotation indicates his respect and his humility for the mystery of human existence. Perhaps he was provided with such humility by his thinking in

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[42] *ibid.*, p. 210.
[43] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p.1038.

prison. When he says, "it is vocation not volition that determines us,"[44] I think his respect and humility reflects his attitude towards the Absolute who is the Maker. His respect and humility had possibilities to form a human-centred idea without God. However, even though in *De Profundis* Wilde posits Christ largely as the human and non-divine figure, in his poem, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, his Christ is divine. This fact demonstrates how he was strongly influenced by Christ.

At this stage, one point should be clarified. As was said, Wilde considered himself an artist like Christ. According to him, Christ's philosophy was the same as Wilde's pluralism. When Wilde analyses Christ's life, he says, "while Christ did not say to men, 'Live for others,' he pointed out that there was no difference at all between the lives of others and one's own life."[45] We can argue that Christ opened his gate to others. In addition, Karl Beckson and Bobby Fong indicate that the images of Christian martyrs are fused with the poet in Wilde's mind.[46] Seeing that Wilde compares Keats to St. Sebastian in his lyrical essay, "The Grave of Keats" (1875), this interpretation is acceptable. Christian martyrs surely include Christ himself, and Wilde was a poet. Consequently, I think it is natural that Wilde was not only shown his way by Christ but also hoped to become like Christ.

Perhaps this hope was connected with his wish to dominate the world and with his fear of being dominated. If he becomes one with Christ, he can be the spiritual king of all kinds of people. Wilde played such a part when he wished to become a central figure of society. However, we should be aware that Wilde used the moon as an analogy for Christ in *De Profundis*. He says, "The cry of Isaiah had really no more to do with his [Christ's] coming than the song of the nightingale has to do with the rising of the moon".[47] As analysed in Chapter 1, the moon means a true dominator in *Salomé*. Then in a subsequent part of *De Profundis* he appreciates Christ as an artist who has a powerful imagination. Therefore, it can be said that Wilde accepted Christ as the Absolute who simultaneously unifies various ideas and tolerates different identities. Becoming one with Christ meant handing himself over to Christ. This attitude also appears in his words, such as, "everyone is worthy of love, except he who thinks that

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[44] *ibid.*, p. 1030.
[45] *loc. cit.*
[46] Karl Beckson and Bobby Fong, "Wilde as Poet", Raby (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Oscar Wilde*, p. 62.
[47] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1033.

he is;"[48] and, "Love is a sacrament that should be taken kneeling."[49] Moreover, as he states that God loves human beings because of this humility, this humility faces the Absolute. He says to Douglas, "I can, at any rate, merely proceed on the lines of my own development, and by accepting all that has happened to me make myself worthy of it."[50] This recalls Christ's final scene on the cross. He handed Himself over to His divine Father and died.

In his hard life in prison, the meaning of empathising with others in sorrow and relating to them through love emerged more clearly. He understood them and also regarded himself as an artist who described beauty brought out by love from a pluralistic viewpoint.

In my opinion, this was the target which came to Wilde through his understanding of Christ in prison. I believe that this was the starting-point for him after his release. At the end of *De Profundis*, he says to Douglas:

> Do not be afraid of the past. If people tell you that it is irrevocable, do not believe them. The past, the present and the future are but one moment in the sight of God, in whose sight we should try to live.[51]

It can be said that these words are not only for Douglas but also for himself. It is said that Christ becomes as one not only with others but also with His divine Father by the mystery of the Trinity.[52] Therefore, in this quotation, we can find that he attempted to move forward from that starting-point with his understanding of Christ and God. However, Wilde was not a saint. Thus, his progress sometimes stopped, and, at other times, he perhaps worried about whether he was going in the right direction. Even in *De Profundis*, such a human weakness can be seen. As was said, he starts this long letter with rebukes and complaints about Douglas. Then he talks about Christ and

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[48] *ibid.*, p. 1034.
[49] *loc. cit.*
[50] *ibid.*, p. 1041.
[51] *ibid.*, p. 1059.
[52] Karl Rahner, one of the most important theologians in the twentieth century, says, "The human reality of Christ must always be the abiding mediation of the immediacy of God to us. When we try to ground this personal relationship to Jesus Christ from below, that is, from the specific unity between the love of God and the concrete love of neighbor, we shall understand better that, as the existentially most real actualization and foundation of the love of neighbor which is our mediation to God, personal love for Jesus Christ can be our permanent mediation to the immediacy of God." Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, translated by William V. Dych (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1978), p. 308.

preaches to Douglas that the importance of forgiveness depends on love. However, he makes accusations against Douglas again in the second half of the work. This demonstrates that his emotions for Douglas are mixed. It is possible that it is proof of his struggle for self-realisation deep within himself.

Wilde was sent back to Pentonville gaol on 18 May 1897 and released the following day. Then he went to his guarantor, Revd. Stewart Headlam's house. He then left Britain for France the same day. This was the last time he was in Britain. It is arguable that, at first, his life in France was meaningful. He kept regular hours and made a remarkable recovery. It is said that he planned to write up his unfinished play, "A Florentine Tragedy" and buy a house to live in with his family.[53] His wife, Constance, sent him letters and several photos of their sons, so it is certain that she also looked for a way to live with him. It was in this way that he learned of the dismissal of the warden, Thomas Martin, and wrote two open letters in 1897 and 1898. As stated in Chapter 4, these appealed to public opinion and were influential in the reform of the prison system. In addition, he wrote *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, published in 1898. This poem, which shows his new approach as an artist, received a review more favourable than the publisher expected. It ran into the seventh edition the following year. However, this fulfilling period did not continue. He could not see his family. The reason was not clear, perhaps his wife's relatives were afraid of a bad influence on his sons. This made his loneliness worse. As early as three months after his release, in a letter to a painter, William Rothenstein (1872-1945), he wrote, "I don't know where I shall go myself. I am not in the mood to do the work I want, and I fear I shall never be."[54]

In his isolation, Wilde sent letters to Douglas. In those letters, he asked Douglas to see him again. They saw each other in August and went to Italy to live together in September. However, at that time, Wilde was robbed of his property and lived at his friends' expense. Therefore, he borrowed royalties from *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* in advance from the publisher. Douglas originally liked living in great style, and Wilde was not used to leading a frugal life. Although prices in Italy were lower than in London, it was as clear as day that they would run out of money soon. To

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[53] Hirai, *Osukā Wairudo no shōgai*, p. 215.
[54] *Letters*, p. 931.

live with Wilde, who did not have money, seemed not to be attractive for Douglas. At the end of the year, he left Wilde. Wilde returned to France and stayed in Paris. On 7 April 1898, he received news of his wife's death. It is easy to imagine that her death must have been a major blow to all members of the family. His sons, who were looked after by Wilde's friends and lived separately in Germany and Monaco, were almost like orphans, because they could not live with their father and had lost their mother. Wilde was also heart-broken. We learn of the depth of his grief from telegrams and letters to his friends.[55] When he visited Constance's grave in Genoa, Italy, in his letter to Robert Ross, he wrote, "Nothing could have been otherwise, and Life is a very terrible thing."[56] He was perhaps in complete despair at that time.

He returned from prison with great hopes to become a better artist with his pluralism and to start a new life. However, these hopes were shattered. It is possible that the main reason was that he could not live with his family. It is not certain that, if he had lived with his family, he could have become the person who he wished to be. However, I think it was certainly a great possibility. With little money, he wandered about and stayed in flea houses in Paris in an unstable state of mind. It deserves to be noted that even in such circumstances, he maintained his interest in Catholicism. If anything, we can argue that because of this desperate situation, he aspired even more for the Absolute. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, who was one of Wilde's friends and a poet, says that he heard of Wilde's wish from Ross. According to Ross, he hoped to be a Roman Catholic believer.[57] His longing for Catholicism probably deepened. For example, in the letter to Ross in 1897, he says that he attended mass at the Catholic Church at Berneval-sur-Mer. In addition, he says that he is going to go to Notre Dame de Liesse and that it has been waiting for him to come.[58]

I believe that the reason why he had a great interest in Catholicism can be found in its pluralistic viewpoint. The First Vatican Council (1869-70) declared papal infallibility, so one may have the impression that Catholicism before the Second Vatican Council (1962-5) was exclusive. However, this is not completely correct. It is certain that papal infallibility had an exclusive nature, but, at that time, even Catholic

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[55] *ibid.*, pp. 1054-5.
[56] *ibid.*, p. 1128.
[57] W. S. Blunt, *My Diaries: Part Two* (London: Martin Secker, 1920), p. 126.
[58] *Letters*, p. 866.

theologians, such as Maurice d'Hulst, the vice-chancellor of the Catholic University of Paris, and August Rohling, stated opinions contrary to this declaration.[59] In addition, Leo XIII, who was elected Pope in 1878, endeavoured to open up the Catholic church to various people. For example, he issued the decree, *Aeterni Patris* in 1879, and encouraged research on theological issues so that more people could understand the Catholic dogma. Moreover, he issued another decree, *Rerum Novarum*, in 1891. This clearly states that it is important for the Catholic church to accept everyone, including working-class people. We can argue that this idea of Leo XIII's had direct links with that of consequent Popes such as Pius XI and John XXIII.[60] Perhaps Wilde, who was against papal infallibility,[61] had a similar viewpoint to Leo XIII's.[62]

When his friend, Reginald Turner, asked Wilde what he considered to be Catholicism, he answered that the Catholic church was for holy people and sinners.[63] It can be argued that this answer reflected the pluralistic viewpoint of Catholicism which was theorised later using Rahner's concept of the "Anonymous Christian". Considering the reactions of the theologians after Papal Infallibility declared in Vatican I and the decrees issued in those days, the pluralistic idea had already existed in Wilde's day. Moreover, as stated in Chapter 2, the biographical fact of John Henry Newman reinforces it. As a clergyman of the Anglican Church and then as a Catholic priest, he aimed for a middle way between the Anglican Church and Catholicism and was appointed a cardinal by Leo XIII in 1879. We may say that Wilde thought that Catholicism was close to the pluralistic viewpoint which he acquired in prison. Moreover, at the invitation of his friend, Harold Mellor, Wilde visited Rome on Holy Thursday in 1900, the final year of his life. In another letter to Ross, he wrote:

> I appeared in the front rank of the pilgrims in the Vatican, and got the blessing of the Holy Father [Leo XIII] – a blessing they would have denied me.

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[59] Maurice Gilbert, "Cinquant'anni di magistero romano sull'ermeneutica biblica. Leonne XIII (1893)-Pio XII (1943)", Pio Laghi, Maurice Gilbert and Albert Vanhoye, *Chiesa e Sacra Scittura* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1994), pp. 12-3.
[60] cf. *Quadragesimo Anno* in 1931 by Pius XI; and *Mater et Magistra* in 1961 by John XXIII.
[61] See footnote 58 in Chapter 2.
[62] This viewpoint was put in statutory form at the Second Vatican Council held by John XXIII. See Appendix 8.
[63] Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde*, p. 583.

> He was wonderful as he was carried past me on his throne, not of flesh and blood, but a white soul robed in white, and an artist as well as a saint – the only instance in History, if the newspapers are to be believed.[64]

It is certain that at that time he was greatly excited, because he had longed to visit Rome since he had been at university. Moreover, he was by chance personally blessed by the Pope. In his excitement, he wrote, "I am not a Catholic: I am simply a violent Papist,"[65] in a letter to another friend, More Adey. Therefore, it is necessary for us to take what he says with a pinch of salt. However, we may say that he yearned for something to rely on, and which accepted him as he was. He asked Christ and Catholicism for this, because, according to him, Christ was as one with anyone in trouble, and Catholicism was a religion for holy people and sinners. He thought that he could achieve self-realisation as well as other sinners and the weak. At that time, from his pluralistic viewpoint, Catholicism became more significant for him.

On 30 November 1900, he died of an inflammation of the ear which affected his brain. That morning, he was baptised by Fr. Cuthbert Dunne on his deathbed at Hôtel d'Alsace. It may be assumed there are some critical opinions of his baptism. For example, he was very ill, so his wish to receive the sacrament as he drew near to death was not confirmed. In addition, some may insist that it was arranged by his friends and had nothing to do with him. As for his condition at the baptism, all reports are based on his friends' and Fr. Dunne's observations, so it is difficult to assess accurately his medical condition. However, we can argue that his wish to be baptised was clear. For example, in the interview by John Clifford Millage, who was a correspondent of *the Daily Chronicle*, Wilde said that his hope was to be a Catholic.[66] This interview was held about three weeks before his death. Moreover, Robert Ross testified that Wilde was "deeply read in Catholic philosophy especially of recent years"[67] and regretted, "I had so often dissuaded him [Wilde] from becoming a Catholic,"[68] in his letters. Fr. Dunne, who ran to Wilde's baptism, also heard of these regrets.[69] These facts show that Wilde's deep desire to be baptised was permanent,

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[64] *Letters*, p. 1179-80.
[65] *ibid.*, p. 1184.
[66] Revd. Edmund Burke, "Oscar Wilde: The Final Scene", *London Magazine*, May 1961, p. 39.
[67] *Letters*, p. 1226.
[68] *ibid.*, p. 1220.
[69] Revd. Bruke, "Oscar Wilde: The Final Scene", *London Magazine* May 1961, p. 39.

especially in his later years, and did not disappear easily. In addition, analysing the development of his pluralistic philosophy, it is understandable that he wished to become a Catholic as it was a religion for holy people and sinners, according to him.

He tried to live in and embody his pluralism which made harmony with all people possible without any prejudice and discrimination. Although he could not have a solid code of values and lost his way in multilayered, complex situations, as *De Profundis* shows, he regarded Jesus Christ as an example. Feeling other people's suffering as his own, Christ bonded with them through love and showed these bonds in sorrow as beauty through his life. In Catholicism, which accepts a wide variety of people, Wilde was keen to become one with Christ and hoped to become a person who could also have relationships with others and accept anyone. Moreover, because of the mystery of the Trinity, Christ accords with God, the creator and the source of all beings.[70] Therefore, becoming one with Christ means corresponding with God who loves everyone like a father.[71] Wilde hoped to be given comfort through being accepted by Catholicism and being embraced by Christ and God. Then he perhaps expected that becoming one with Christ and God brought out a bond with others in sorrow and that his sadness changed into joy through sharing it with Christ, God and others. I believe that comfort and joy in pluralism was his view of the Absolute.

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[70] Genesis (1:1-4); and Isaiah (40:12-17, 21-31).
[71] Christ called Him "Ab'ba". This Aramaic word has a nuance, "gentle Dad". cf. Matthew (26:36); Mark (14:36); and Luke (11:2).

8.2. Mishima's Criticism of Wilde's View of the Absolute: "Osukā Wairudo ron" (1950)

As stated in the introduction, Mishima wrote a treatise, "Osukā Wairudo ron", in 1950. Here, Mishima deals with Wilde's way of life and refers to his main works such as *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *De Profundis*. Compared with this work, others of Mishima's about Wilde are not so comprehensive. Consequently, we may say that this treatise most clearly demonstrates to us Mishima's views on Wilde. In this section, through his critical analysis of Wilde, which is mainly in "Osukā Wairudo ron", I will attempt to investigate Mishima's interpretation of Wilde's work and to clarify the similarities, parallels and differences between their views of the Absolute.

To examine these issues, it is necessary to note two points. One is that Mishima acquired some information about Wilde from André Gide's writings, such as his novels, *Les Nourritures Terrestres* [Fruits of the earth] (1897), *L' Immoraliste* [The Immoralist] (1902) and his critical essay, *Oscar Wilde* (1905).[72] For example, in his treatise, Mishima quotes some information about homosexual habits from Gide's writings with the phrase, "According to Gide,"[73] and calls Gide "Wilde's disciple".[74] However, as Robert Sherard, one of Wilde's friends, objected in his book,[75] Gide's writings include many mistakes and misunderstandings. For instance, Gide says that Wilde returned to Britain from Algeria because he was sued by the Marquess of Queensberry. However, Wilde sued him first, so this is a clear mistake. It is also doubtful whether the relationship between Wilde and Gide was intimate enough to call Gide Wilde's disciple. Sometimes his mistakes and misinterpretations may unfairly

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[72] Amongst them, the final one, *Oscar Wilde*, had probably given Mishima much information about Wilde. This book is composed of his memoirs, which was originally printed in *L' Ermitage* in 1902, his autobiographical novel, *Si le Grain Ne Meurt* [If It Die...] (1926), his critical essays about Wilde's *De Profundis* and some parts of his diary relating to Wilde. This work was translated into Japanese from Stuart Mason's English translation, *Oscar Wilde: A Study from the French of André Gide* (1905), by Jirō Wakeda in 1913. This was the first translation of Gide's work in Japan. *Si le Grain Ne Meurt* is conventionally categorised as autobiography. However, his subjective viewpoint is excessive and sometimes misrepresents facts. Thus, I regard it as an autobiographical novel.

[73] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 343.

[74] *ibid.*, p. 345.

[75] Robert Sherard, *Oscar Wilde: Twice Defended from André Gide's Wicked Lies and Frank Harris's Cruel Libels* (Chicago: The Argus, 1934).

diminish Wilde's standing. Therefore, Mishima perhaps looked at Wilde through a false impression created by Gide. In his treatise, Mishima discusses Gide's ironic attitude towards Wilde, "not a great writer, but a great liver".[76] According to this viewpoint, Wilde was defeated by life and failed to be an artist. The image of a weak Wilde and strong Douglas in another critical essay of Mishima's, "Kanpon *Gokuchūki* – Wairudo saku" [The Complete Edition of *De Profundis* by Wilde] (1951), probably arises from the impression given in Gide's writings. Consequently, it can be one of the reasons for a negative analysis of Wilde by Mishima in "Osukā Wairudo ron".

The other point is the text which Mishima read. Mishima based his treatise, "Osukā Wairudo ron", on his interpretation of Wilde's works, especially *De Profundis*. It has already been pointed out that, in general terms, there are three versions of *De Profundis*. These are the 1905, the 1949 and the 1962 editions. It is certain that Mishima read Japanese translations of the first two editions. As for the complete edition in 1962, he left no reference to it, so it is not clear whether he read it. His treatise was written in 1950 and another essay about *De Profundis* was written in 1951. Therefore, when he uses the term, *the Complete Edition*, it means the 1949 edition. As was said in this chapter, in the 1905 edition, many references blaming Douglas' bad behaviour on Wilde were deleted. Even in the 1949 edition, some were still left out. In those editions, Wilde's ugly emotions, bitterness and suffering as a human being were omitted. As a result, it seems that the development of his philosophy was not adequately understood by the reader, including Mishima. In fact, Wilde's pluralism, which had intensified in prison through struggling against his own negative emotions, declined to some extent. This point should be considered in investigating Mishima's interpretation of Wilde.

On this basis, how Mishima interpreted Wilde will be examined. Mishima begins his treatise as follows:

> I will not concern myself with any writers and their works without physical yearning. This desire can be a simple feeling of longing for some sorts of objects, and on other occasions, it can be consolation, which is understood only by a sense of affinity. In some cases, it can be even fiery hatred.

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[76] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 336.

> To my surprise, in the case of Wilde, he is each one separately and all of them together.[77]

It is arguable that this quotation clearly shows Mishima's image of Wilde. It frequently changed its meaning and nature. This makes Mishima's attitude towards Wilde ambivalent. I think the reason for this ambivalence was related to Wilde's pluralism. The different elements in him provided different images. What aspect of Wilde did Mishima admire?

As for Wilde's philosophy, Mishima states, "He was never a Cynic,"[78] and discusses how Lord Henry's cynical laughing is a mere device for the development of the plot in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Perhaps this analysis is based on some of Wilde's statements in *De Profundis* such as, "It [cynicism] has its social value, and to an artist all modes of expression are interesting, but in itself it is a poor affair, for to the true cynic nothing is ever revealed."[79] Mishima also says, "The paradoxist paints himself into a corner and completely deprives himself of any right to subterfuge by his paradoxes,"[80] and defines him as "sincerity of paradox".[81] It is possible that this statement examines the mechanism and function of Wilde's aphorisms which come from his pluralism. As shown in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Wilde's pluralistic viewpoint frequently criticises the hero's code of values. I think it acts even on Wilde and shake his self-confidence. In fact, when he criticised something, he also criticised himself. These mechanisms and functions perhaps provided him with opportunities for self-analysis, and, as a result, brought out sincerity in him. We may say that this has a close connection with the main theme of *The Picture of Dorian Grey* which is developed through the layered structure. Regarding this novel, Mishima says:

> *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is the mud churned up by the footsteps of his talent. However, nobody can deny that one pair of those sloppy footprints is an angel's.[82]

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[77] *ibid.*, p. 335.
[78] *ibid.*, p. 339.
[79] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1049.
[80] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 336.
[81] *ibid.*, p. 337.
[82] *loc. cit.*

As these quotations demonstrate, Mishima understood Wilde's pluralistic viewpoint and its value brought out by its sincerity. Therefore, it is quite possible that, through this, Mishima perceived Wilde's anxiety arising from his pluralism in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and in *Salomé*.

Mishima understood Wilde's pluralism and appreciated his sincerity arising from his pluralistic viewpoint. However, as Mishima says at the beginning of his treatise, if Wilde had different images for him, it is also true that Wilde did not have any unshakable image in Mishima's mind. In fact, as shown by Mishima's negative comments, although Mishima understood Wilde's pluralistic viewpoint, he simultaneously found some points unacceptable in Wilde's pluralism.

In his treatise, Mishima refers to Wilde's critical essay, "Pen, Pencil and Poison" (1889). This deals with Thomas Wainewright who was a renowned connoisseur of works of art and art critic. Wilde describes how Wainewright created poetry from paintings and how his critical art essays became valued as great literary works. However, Wainewright was also a poisoner who killed his family. I think Wilde was interested from a pluralistic viewpoint in the link between Wainewright's talent for art and his crime of murder, because it can be considered pluralism with its bright and its dark sides. Reflecting on Wilde's critical essay, Mishima says:

> He [Wilde] desperately intended to connect Wainewright's *culture* of art with his sin of murder to make his sin fit the true sense of the word, sin. In this respect, Wilde involuntarily came close to Protestantism. Its dogma warns against people feeling at peace in their soul, so I think it never lends countenance to Wainewright who was lazy and killed other people for amusement. However, Wilde interpreted Wainewright's crime as a serious challenge to try to change pre-ordained human destiny and to have the liberty to choose one's destiny. This theme is also found in *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*.[83]

This passage indicates Mishima's interpretation of Wilde. As stated in Chapter 6, Wilde became aware of the dark side of life in prison and his pluralism intensified. Before imprisonment, he had not actually experienced the bitterness of life, so perhaps he consciously made an effort to focus on the dark side of life to intensify his pluralistic viewpoint. Mishima perceived this "desperate" effort in Wilde's view of Wainewright. Through evaluating works of art, Wainewright created new works of art

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[83] *ibid.*,p. 348.

in the form of critical essays. Through killing people, he also created a new destiny for himself. We can argue that both are challenges to change and to create something, one coming from a bright angle and one from the dark. I believe that Mishima understood that Wilde, who tried to explore further his pluralism, was interested in Wainewright's crime from this viewpoint. It should be pointed out that in his treatise Mishima quoted Wilde, "Crime in England is rarely the result of sin. It is nearly always the result of starvation."[84] In this quotation, Mishima thought that Wilde attempted to find a deep meaning for crimes, although most of them had simple motives. He had believed that Wilde made serious efforts to gain further understanding of his pluralistic viewpoint. In addition, Mishima appreciated Wilde's attitude which encouraged to change in "pre-ordained human destiny" and the creation of something new in one's life. Mishima considered that Wilde's attitude "came close to Protestantism." Wilde made great efforts to change "pre-ordained human destiny" and to widen his knowledge of his pluralism. Therefore, it can be said that he was not content with his present lot and ceaselessly sought improvement. According to Mishima, this effort concurred with the dogma of Protestantism which dislikes "peace of the soul".

Mishima used the word, "involuntary" and believed that Wilde did not hope to approach it. I analyse this as follows. Wilde hoped that everyone was respected without any prejudice or discrimination. However, the attitude where one is not content with one's present lot and ceaselessly seeks improvement, always rejects something. If one seeks changes for specific purposes and dislikes peace one cannot help rejecting something. Moreover, pushing forward with a plan with a particular code of values may discriminate against people who have different opinions. It cannot accept all people. It certainly goes against Wilde's pluralism. Thus, I think Mishima used the word, "involuntary".

Here, Wilde's logic was inconsistent and Mishima criticised it. In other words, because of anxiety about this inconsistency, Wilde could not help wanting "peace of the soul", later. As previously stated, because of his pluralism, he lost his way among different codes of values. This anxiety was dealt with in his works, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Salomé*. Wilde appreciated Wainewright who attempted to bring together his bright and dark sides. However, when he wrote this appreciation, his

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[84] Wilde, "Pen, Pencil and Poison", *Works*, p. 1105.

pluralism already reflected this anxiety which clearly appeared in his later works. In fact, as long as he kept searching for his own way in his pluralism, this anxiety continued. If he had had a solid code of values to avoid this anxiety, it would have conflicted with his pluralism. Then he was confused and longed for "peace of the soul". According to this analysis, Mishima perhaps believed that, as a result of his pluralism, Wilde gave up looking for his own way, and Wilde's only choice was to acquire "peace of the soul".

Mishima criticised Wilde's attitude in longing for "peace of the soul", because he thought that it was negligence and connected to self-justification like a thief who becomes violent when detected. For example, Wilde wrote about absolution as follows:

> A man's very highest moment is, I have no doubt at all, when he kneels in the dust, and beats his breast, and tells all the sins of his life.[85]

On the other hand, Mishima states, "The remorse in *De Profundis* seems to be quite pompous."[86] In this quotation, Mishima's negative attitude towards Wilde's suffering and absolution can be seen. Mishima also states, "a simple and healthy groan is strangely found [even in his description of pain];"[87] and, "He hoped for someone to write his biography and lived for this purpose."[88] Judging from these quotations, I think Mishima raised questions about Wilde's attitude towards the development of his philosophy and view of the Absolute. Perhaps he believed that when Wilde failed to develop a consistent philosophy, he stopped thinking how he should develop his pluralism. Leaving his philosophy inconsistent, in his anxiety arising from his pluralism, Wilde needed that "peace of the soul" which is granted by the Absolute. Then, it led him to self-justification. Mishima arrived at this interpretation and could not accept such an arrogant attitude. Looking back on this, Mishima probably thought that Wilde's pluralism was shallow although he really tried to reinforce it and that his efforts to acquire a pluralistic viewpoint, accepting even homosexuality, were mere decorations to attract the attention of others.

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[85] *ibid.*, p. 1050.
[86] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 346.
[87] *ibid.*, p. 342.
[88] *ibid.*, p. 344.

As stated in the previous chapters, Mishima did not isolate himself in the ideal world and attempted to be involved in the real world after World War II. After writing his novel, *The Sound of Waves*, he regretted his poor analysis of what the real world is, and says, "what I created is just a man-made world with a hint of the Palace of Trianon."[89] It is probable that this self-critical comment was applicable to Wilde, whom he blames for it in his treatise. Mishima considered Wilde's attitude, which was thoughtless reliance on the Absolute, the abandonment of his endeavour to cultivate pluralism and a justification for himself as he was. We can argue that it was nothing less than insolence for Mishima.

Intrinsically, absolution is accompanied by regret and lament. However, as the quotations above demonstrate, Mishima did not understand it in Wilde's case. With regard to this point, it is necessary to confirm two things. Firstly the *De Profundis* which he read was not the complete edition of 1962. As stated, Wilde's allegations against Douglas were deleted in the 1905 and in the 1949 editions. His allegations are also his blame and regret for himself. Therefore, it can be one of the reasons that Mishima thought Wilde's sorrow was only superficial. Secondly, we can argue that Mishima's view of absolution is quite different from Wilde's. As previously discussed, Mishima's philosophy converged with *vijñaptimātratā*. Although there were some points of difference caused by Mishima's peculiar interpretation, his philosophy accorded with it in principle. Consequently, it can be said that he understood the concept of absolution with the rule of cause (*hetu*) and effect (*phala*). In *vijñaptimātratā*, earthly desire caused by conceptualisation (*vikalpita*) causes various actions, or karma, and because of one's own desires and karma, one transmigrates in this world of suffering. One has to atone for the result of one's earthly desires to liberate oneself from the wheel of life by *vijñaptimātratā*. (In Mahāyāna Buddhism, there is a concept of relief through the Buddha. However, as stated in Chapter 7, this is not found in Mishima's works.) Mishima referred to Dazai Osamu, another modern Japanese writer, in his critical essay. As stated in Chapter 7, Mishima criticises Dazai's despair in his works and says, "A patient who makes no effort to recover does not deserve to be called a patient in the true sense of the word."[90] In

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[89] Mishima, "Shōsetsuka no kyūka", *Works* 27, p. 168.
[90] *ibid.*, p. 94.

Wilde's case, I think Mishima also regards Wilde's attitude towards demanding forgiveness of his sins with folded arms, as insolence. He thought that we should assume full responsibility for the effects of our earthly desires.

Perhaps this was connected with their views of the Absolute. What was Mishima's understanding of Wilde's view of the Absolute? Wilde judges that Christ showed his empathy and relationship with others as beauty through his life filled with love. In Wilde, showing permanent beauty to people was a significant role of works of art, and artists should aim to create such works of art. Consequently, Christ was an ideal artist for him. On the other hand, with regard to Christ, who attracted Wilde, Mishima says:

> The reason why Christ was a distinctive person was not his life but his destiny of being crucified.[91]

Before this quotation, Mishima lists the distinctive facts in Wilde's life, such as homosexuality and imprisonment. Then comparing them with other writers' biographical facts, he says they were not unusual for public figures in nineteenth century England. Therefore, Mishima says that Wilde longed for Christ's unique life to make him extraordinary. In fact, Mishima understood that the development of his pluralism was no longer attractive for him. This can be considered another reason for Mishima's negative analysis of Wilde, and I think this is why he thought Wilde's remorse in *De Profundis* was pompous. Mishima thought that to make his life unique, Wilde needed to suffer like Christ and, thus, says that, for Wilde, as his fairytales show, "pain was pleasure".[92] Through depending upon Christ, Wilde was completely acknowledged by Him and was provided with "peace of the soul" which was brought about by self-justification. Moreover, through becoming one with Christ who bonded with others in sorrow, he could strengthen his pluralism by his experiences of imprisonment and absolution without anxiety. It was no longer necessary for him to cultivate his pluralism. Then, because of his rebirth, he expected to attract public interest after his release. I think Mishima strongly believed that the meaning of Christ

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[91] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 344.
[92] *ibid.*, p. 336.

in Wilde's philosophy was as described above and criticised his shallow views of the Absolute based on his self-justification. At the end of his treatise, Mishima says:

> Nobody may be interested in Wilde's sincerity. There is no longer any use in seeing the life of a man who lived for himself.[93]

However, it is true that Mishima also had a tendency to seek tragedy. For example, in his short story, "Patriotism", the hero is left by his colleagues and cannot rise in revolt with them. In *Spring Snow*, the hero's wish to see the heroine is rejected by the Abbess, but he continues to visit the temple in the snow. Mishima described these episodes in scenes of purity and sincerity. This can also explain his positive attitude towards St. Sebastian. They are closely related to Nietzsche's concept of the Dionysiac which is the ecstasy of uniting with a fundamental existence. As formerly discussed in the introduction to this thesis, Mishima was influenced by this concept. He depicted positively those scenes caused by tragic circumstances and expected to accord with the fundamental concepts which transcend this world. Wilde also hoped to unite with others and Christ through empathy with sorrow. With respect to uniting with the fundamental concept, we can argue that their spiritual positions were close. Moreover, Wilde states that truth in art, which Christ showed, is "that in which the outward is expressive of the inward; in which the soul is made flesh, and the body instinct with spirit: in which Form reveals".[94] It can be said that this is quite similar to Mishima's ideas. He described the daffodil as a symbol of unity between the inner being and the external being in *Kyōko no ie* and *harakiri* as a representation of harmony between inner illusion and worldly reality. Consequently, I believe that Wilde's reference here demonstrates their closeness. It seemed to be accepted by Mishima, who sought a solution for dichotomies such as between the spirit and the body and between transcendence and mutability. Although Mishima criticised Wilde's view of the Absolute, in particular his idea of becoming one with the Absolute in suffering, which resolves the dichotomy, he must empathise with Wilde's view.

However, Mishima did not understand the mystery that when one regretted one's sins with humility, the charity of God became apparent. This can be

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[93] *ibid.*, p. 350.
[94] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1032.

found in Christ's words, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."[95] As Christ says, "love one another; as I have loved you,"[96] because of this, one can be charitable to others, and love spreads amongst human beings. Wilde thought that this is the beauty which Christ represented, but the following quotation from Mishima reinforces his lack of understanding of this mystery, "a sense of sins and that of beauty exist simultaneously in the human mind without any link."[97] In a subsequent section, Mishima concludes that Wilde did not understand this fact. As this quotation shows, for Mishima, the result of sins should be assumed by individuals and should not be used as access to the Absolute. If one connects the sense of sin and that of beauty, one may be acknowledged by the Absolute from one's self-justification. Mishima had imagined at that time that negative factors such as pain and sorrow no longer tormented Wilde and only served to make his life distinctive. Wilde could not have a solid code of values among different ones. Mishima interpreted that, turning again to Christ, Wilde gave up trying to find his way by the development of his pluralism. Therefore, Mishima accuses Wilde in this way, "God is a human final excuse, and paradoxes are short cuts to God."[98] However, if Wilde had known of Mishima's criticism, he would have objected that Mishima overestimated human ability. Wilde did not think that a human being was not enough strong to assume full responsibility for all results of one's deeds including one's sins. Therefore, as his works such as *De Profundis* and *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* demonstrate, he considered redemption brought about through Christ important.

It is possible that Mishima's view of Wilde, which was a complicated mixture of empathy and antipathy, was linked with the philosophy of his final years. As was shown in Chapter 4, their attitudes towards society were related to their feelings of guilt. Even in *De Profundis*, written in prison, the following is found:

> The prison-system is absolutely and entirely wrong. I would give anything to be able to alter it when I go out. I intend to try.[99]

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[95] Mark (2:15-17).
[96] John (13:34).
[97] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 348.
[98] *ibid.*, p. 336.
[99] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1038.

There is a strong desire to blame English society for fraud and to correct its wrongs. We may say that it was difficult for him to correct these wrongs. He was an Irishman and a writer. He was neither a politician nor an official. His influence on society was not great. Although his efforts succeeded in the case of the prison-system, it was dangerous for him to accuse English society of fraud. Even more, whilst in prison, he lost his social status, friends, family and property. Therefore, it was unlikely that his accusation was taken seriously by the authorities. However, the more impossible to accomplish it was, the more it suited Mishima. In "Patriotism", the hero, Lieutenant Takeyama, commits *harakiri* to bring together illusion and worldly reality. Kiyoaki Matsugae, the hero of the first story of *Hōjō no umi*, risks his life on the tiny possibility of seeing his girlfriend and visits the temple in the snow. Perhaps these characters are linked with St. Sebastian whom both Mishima and Wilde admired. In addition, through his fiction and critical essays, Mishima also condemned the Japanese tendency to regard spirituality as unimportant and to seek mainly economic prosperity. In his treatise, Mishima examined Wilde and says that self-glory and sincerity had the same meaning for him. In Wilde's challenge to English society in the nineteenth century, Mishima found that Wilde worshipped himself as a hero. However, he simultaneously found his sincerity. His morale being boosted by worshipping himself, he was about to strike a blow against social injustice. Mishima, who also says, "Do not despise self-glory,"[100] must understand this. For Mishima, this sincerity must also reflect Wilde's efforts to develop his pluralism no further. I think Mishima believed that when Wilde intended to correct social wrongs at the risk of his life, he should have continued to look for how to perfect his pluralist philosophy to show an ideal society. According to this belief, Mishima perhaps accused Wilde of abandoning the quest, using Christ as a cover.

In his later years, Mishima clearly described transcendence as the nature of men, and mutability as that of women in his fiction such as *Hōjō no umi*. However, the germ of this thinking can be already found in the treatise on Wilde. For example, Mishima says:

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[100] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 348.

> When society burns with anger to ostracise some man, it most greatly loves him. In this respect, society closely resembles a jealous woman.[101]

In this quotation, he compares society as worldly reality to a woman and considers Wilde's challenge a male action. His challenge to society based on his pluralism included a kind of illusion as an image of a better society, so, as in the analysis of the heroes' actions in *Hōjō no umi*, it can be called transcendence. We can argue that Mishima found a close affinity for St. Sebastian in Wilde, and it contributed to the development of Mishima's philosophy. Therefore, I believe that Mishima appreciated Wilde's efforts to perfect his pluralism and bring about a better society.

Mishima understood that "He [Wilde] had always been chased by an awareness that he could not gain satisfaction in his life,"[102] but Wilde gave up his endeavour to find his way in pluralism and retired to the peace of the soul using Christ as an excuse. This interpretation of Wilde was probably a starting-point for Mishima. When he wrote this treatise, he made an effort to take part in the real world in the post-war period. Therefore, Mishima, who tried to change his romantic tendency during wartime, was influenced by Wilde who aimed to bring about change. Moreover, Mishima understood that Wilde seriously intended to accuse society of fraud at the risk of his life, and it was linked not only with the characters in Mishima's fiction but also with his actions. As stated beforehand in the introduction, Mishima attacked the headquarters of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces along with the members of his private army. He denounced the Japanese social climate, which made too much of economic prosperity in the post-war period, and committed *harakiri*.

> Pain is one of the forms of the drama. [...] Self-glory is the stage for this drama and also seemed to be a nursery garden of morality for Wilde.[103]

> There is such a heroic self-glory in this world, as manifested in a passion play by *dramatis personae* keeping on striking themselves on the chest until they bleed. I think Wilde's self-glory resembles that of those people suffering for a glorious cause in the play. Why do they do so? – because this is the best way to express themselves as men.[104]

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[101] *ibid.*, p. 343.
[102] *ibid.*, p. 341.
[103] *ibid.*, pp. 340-1.
[104] *ibid.*, pp. 348-9.

It can be said that these references to Wilde are also valid for Mishima himself. Mishima understood that, his morale being boosted by self-glory, Wilde challenged the code of values in his society. It was difficult to accomplish, but through it, he intended to express his ideas. I believe that this is also Mishima's final state of mind when he attacked the SDF. Thus, there were strong links between Mishima and Wilde, and this continued until his death.

It can be argued that what separated Wilde from Mishima was Wilde's perception of Christ. Mishima believed although Wilde had a great desire to challenge society, he stopped searching for a way to perfect his philosophy and chose to be acknowledged by Christ as a human being with many contradictions and faults. Mishima, who developed his philosophy using some concepts in *vijñaptimātratā*, regarded it as a domineering attitude. He understood that it brought about self-justification in Wilde, who did not develop his pluralism further, and left unsolved the issue of how he should accept different codes of values. Perhaps Mishima thought if Wilde's pluralism had continued to develop, he would have come closer to Mishima's position. The reason can be found in Wilde's sentences at the end of *De Profundis*:

> Time and space, succession and extension, are merely accidental conditions of thought. The Imagination can transcend them, and move in a free sphere of ideal existences.[105]

It is possible that this is quite close to Mishima's philosophy which understands the connection between him and this world using two concepts, transcendence and mutability. Mishima empathised with Wilde's thinking to a great degree, so I think he was bitterly upset that Wilde abandoned active research of his pluralism. As stated, in Mishima's later years, he found Mahāyāna Buddhism's failure to address the discrepancy between individual liberation through becoming a Buddha and other people's liberation was quite a difficult issue. How he could contribute to others' spiritual awakening was a serious problem for him. Similarly, uniting with others with different codes of values was the main theme of Wilde's pluralism. Therefore, if Wilde

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[105] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1059.

had continued to investigate and perfect his pluralism, he would have shown Mishima how to resolve the gap. If he had done so, Mishima would have appreciated Wilde towards the end of his life. However, Mishima understood that Wilde left this difficult theme behind and moved on to Christ and considered Him the absolute code of values. Mishima must regret that Wilde's philosophy ended in this way.

The following quotation clearly shows his thinking on Wilde in this matter:

> In this book [*De Profundis*] all his important ideas and themes are given wings and integrated in a moment like the marriage of ants flying in the air. In this so significant book, he says, "Those whom he saved from their sins are saved simply for beautiful moments in their lives," and glory to Christ is celebrated illogically.[106]

Here, Mishima criticises Wilde for becoming comfortable and abandoning his philosophy and expediently aspiring to the Absolute. Mishima thought that Wilde's stance was that of a loser. Therefore, he says that, as compared with Wilde, Douglas, who continued being selfish, was better.[107] Wilde hoped to accept all others' views and also longed to be acknowledged by the Absolute. This latter yearning seemed to become stronger than the former in his mind. Thinking of his sad life after his release from prison, I imagine so.

Although Mishima empathised with Wilde, he denounced his view of the Absolute. Then what view of the Absolute did Mishima have? After the break with Wilde, in terms of the connection between himself and this world, how did he define the Absolute? These issues will be researched in the next section.

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[106] Mishima, "Osukā Wairudo ron", *Works* 25, p. 350.
[107] Mishima, "Kanpon *Gokuchūki* – Wairudo saku", *Works* 25, p. 414. This "Complete Edition" means the 1949 edition.

8.3. Mishima: His View of the Absolute and Suicide from the Perspective of *Vijñaptimātratā*

As previously stated, Mishima understood this world through his dualism and intended to resolve the dichotomy in his philosophy. This dichotomy emerged as the conflict between the spirit and the body at one stage and between illusion and worldly reality at another. Then, as was mentioned, when liberation was disintegrated in the face of mutability in his final tetralogy, the Emperor appeared as the existence which was neither situated in the field of mutability nor swallowed up by it. The Emperor was not obscure like liberation in his tetralogy, *Hōjō no umi*, and appeared in a more concrete image. The Emperor, for Mishima, was "the fundamental existence where the honour of the chrysanthemum [which is a symbol of Japanese culture] and the Japanese sword [which is that of the samurai spirit] come together and integrate in their goals."[108] In his critical essay, "Bunka bōei ron" [A Treatise on Protecting Culture] (1969), he also states that the Emperor is "the origin of continuity of time and space".[109] As Nagayoshi Masao says, this can be called "a notional device which Mishima needed to explain the centre of Japanese culture as a whole."[110] Either way, it can be said that the Emperor is concerned with changeable time and space, and does not change in the world which constantly repeats birth and death as mutability. Mishima stated that the Emperor included many kinds of conflict and remained above them. The following quotation from Mishima's critical essay, "2.26 jiken to watashi" [The February 26th Incident and I], which comments on "Patriotism", reinforces this opinion:

> The lieutenant and his wife unconsciously acquire the best moment of life under hard circumstances and die gloriously. Their sovereign joy of body and their supreme pain of body are united under one principle, and it invites the coming of glory. I could describe such a situation by setting the February 26th Incident as the background of this short story.[111]

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[108] Mishima, "Bunka bōei ron", *Works* 33, p. 400.
[109] *ibid.*, p. 396.
[110] Nagayoshi Masao, "Bunkateki tennō" [The Cultural Emperor], Miyoshi (ed.), *Mishima Yukio hikkei*, p. 58.
[111] Mishima, "2.26 jiken to watashi", *Works* 32, p. 359.

The young officers launched the *coup d'état* to solve the social problems caused by a great famine. They aimed for the immediate control of the Emperor. The Emperor, who is at the ideological core of the February 26th Incident, resolves the conflict between "joy" and "pain" and makes it possible for the couple to reach a glorious death through that resolution. When Mishima wrote "Patriotism", his view of the Emperor seemed to be called fantastic. However, we can argue that this view took centre stage in the process of writing *Hōjō no umi*. Through analysis of the Japanese Emperor in Mishima's philosophy, I will investigate what view of the Absolute he had.

Mishima describes his attitude towards the transcendental Emperor using the words, "renketsu no jō", which means a passionate feeling of connection like love. There is a proverb, "love is blind". As his works listed in the footnotes of this section show, it is clear that Mishima's references to the Emperor lack an objective viewpoint. Although this can be explained as emotional blindness, I think it is also necessary to investigate it in a link with the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming, as was stated in Chapter 7.

The Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming are a form of Confucianism and were established as a criticism of the doctrines of Zhu Xi (Chu Hsi), which is also a form of Confucianism. The doctrines of Zhu Xi became an official teaching of the Ming dynasty in China in the late fourteenth century. However, they had gradually become preoccupied with the pursuit of complicated interpretations of dogma. The Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming were a new form of Confucianism advocated by Wang Yangming to point out the superficiality of Zhu Xi at that time. The work which best shows Mishima's views of these doctrines is "Kakumei tetsugaku to shite no Yōmeigaku" [The Neo-Confucian Doctrines of Wang Yangming as a Philosophy of Revolution] (1970). This demonstrates that he arrived at a general view of the doctrines from Inoue Tetsujirō's book, *Nihon Yōmeigakuha no tetsugaku* [The Philosophy of the Neo-Confucian Doctrines of Wang Yangming in Japan] (1900) and includes some distinctive points of his interpretation.

First of all, we can say that Mishima's interpretation of the doctrines is quite rigid. For example, he says, "Where there is no action, there is no perception;"[112]

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[112] Mishima, "Kakumei tetsugaku to shite no Yōmeigaku", *Works* 34, p. 458.

and, "Wang Yangming did not admit the value of perception itself,"[113] in that work. However, Wang Yangming did not consider perception which did not lead to action, to be worthless. Wang Yangming stated that knowing good and doing good, can include the knowledge which is stored by reading books without any actual action.[114] Wang Yangming's target is only the doctrines of Zhu Xi, which amounted to mere unaccountable interpretation of dogma, the superficial ceremonies and meaningless rituals which the scholars of those doctrines enacted. Mishima's interpretation was quite rigid in this respect. He seemed to understand that it was an important principle of the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming that knowledge must be accompanied by actions (*Chikōgōitsu*), and he took this idea to the extreme. In this, we can observe his style of thought influenced by dichotomies and his attitude toward seeking how to resolve them.

Secondly, the uniqueness of his view of the Great Void (*Taikyo*) is illustrated in the following:

> Although there was no word, nihilism, in the period of the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming, the concept appears in the theory of Returning to the Great Void [*Ki-Taikyo*] of the Chūsai school which was led by Ōshio Heihachirō (Chūsai).[115]

With regard to this quotation, it is possible to criticise it for making an easy connection between Nietzschean nihilism and the concept of the Great Void. Nihilism, which denies an established code of values or view of morality, cannot be equated with the Great Void which is defined as the root of all things. We may say that it is a leap in logic. However, for this reason, Mishima's spiritual position at that time can be analysed. He knew that even liberation led by the circle of transmigration was swallowed up by mutability and probably felt emptiness. I believe that this was the

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[113] *ibid.*, p. 459.

[114] cf. Wang Shouren, "Chuanxi lu", *Wang Yangming quanji* [Complete Works of Wang Yangming], Vol. 1 (Hong Kong: Kwong Chi Book Co., 1959), esp. pp. 26-58, pp. 58-83; and Iki Hiroyuki, "Wang Yangming's Doctrine of Innate Knowledge of the Good", *Philosophy East and West,* Vol. 11:1, 2, April, July (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1961), pp. 27-44.

[115] Mishima, "Kakumei tetsugaku to shite no Yōmeigaku", *Works* 34, p. 456. Ōshio Heihachirō (1793-1837) was a scholar of the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming and an officer in the late Edo era, the nineteenth century. When the great famine occurred from 1883 to1887, he suggested the government save poor people from starvation. However, this was not accepted. The following year, he raised arms to challenge government policy. However, the rebellion was suppressed, and he killed himself.

nihilism for him. Therefore, he had yearned for the source of various things, which included even mutability, to give relief. This, he reasoned, must be the Great Void in the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming. Consequently, in prompting him to aspire to the Great Void, nihilism was firmly connected to the Great Void. This was related to his phrase, "dignity which follows on from nihilism".[116]

Thirdly, Mishima's interpretation of the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming was Japanized. We can see this from his usage of the word, "Revolution", in the title of his critical essay. What he means is a major change of spiritual state. It does not have the original meaning of a change in the Mandate of Heaven, as Mencius insisted in his philosophy. The Japanese scholars who first systematised Neo-Confucianism in Japan, were Fujiwara Seika (1561-1619) and his disciple, Hayashi Razan (1583-1657). After Hayashi became the advisor to the Shōgun, the government encouraged the study of the doctrines of Zhu Xi. Thus, Confucianism flourished and many scholars appeared in the Kasei period (1804-30). It can be said that at that time, disciplines were not as distinct as they are now. For example, like Kumazawa Banzan (1619-91), to whom Mishima refers in his essay, some scholars studied both the doctrines of Zhu Xi and those of Wang Yangming. In addition, Sakuma Shōzan (1811-64) and Watanabe Kazan (1793-1841) devoted themselves wholeheartedly to Dutch studies, the only Western learning in Japan at that time,[117] as well as those forms of Confucianism. Therefore, it is quite possible that Mishima had been familiar with the Japanized doctrines of Zhu Xi, which Asami Keisai (1652-1711) demonstrated, through studying Wang Yangming. We can argue that this Japanized doctrine unites the doctrines of Zhu Xi with the Japanese emperor system. For example, in the doctrines, however, the theory of the interaction between heaven and humanity[118] is applied to the Shōgun, not to the Emperor. In fact, the Emperor is located in a position which is outside the dynamism between heaven and

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[116] Mishima, "Kakumei tetsugaku to shite no Yōmeigaku", *Works* 34, p. 481.
[117] At that time, the government forbade western trade, and only the Netherlands and Portugal were excepted.
[118] This is one of the basic theories of Confucianism and was systematised by Dong Zhongshu (195 BC-115 BC) in the context of organising folk worship at that time. It defines that heaven promotes a virtuous person to become a leader. In Mencius' (372 BC-289 BC) theory, if the leader becomes immoral, people had the right to replace him. This idea was also important for the theory of the interaction between heaven and humanity.

humanity. It is probable that this view influenced Mishima's understanding of the Emperor.

As stated, as the existence who includes several kinds of conflict, who stands in a different dimension, and is the source of various things, the Emperor was the Absolute for Mishima. Faced with the Absolute, criticism by human beings is relatively insignificant. That his attitude toward the Emperor was lacking in objectivity was caused by such a belief. The existence, which is located deeper than *ālayavijñāna*, is called the truth (*tathatā*) in *vijñaptimātratā*. We can argue that this concept equates with the Emperor as the Absolute in Mishima's thinking. As ascetics aim to acquire the truth through ascetic practices, perhaps Mishima also aimed to be in harmony with the Emperor. Then, in this process, he tried to save others by showing the Emperor, who was "a guarantee of series of time (eternity) which is transpersonal, traditional and historical",[119] as a basis of the national polity which is "the identity of the Japanese people and their culture".[120] As Wilde had difficulty in associating with others with different codes of values, the gap between individual liberation and other people's spiritual awakening was quite a difficult issue for Mishima. We can argue that this kind of enlightenment was Mishima's attempt to save others in his own way and a resolution of the gap. We cannot help saying that it was an extraordinary intention. However, as he stated in his treatise on Wilde, I believe that the more it was difficult to fulfil, the more it could be an object of his "disease of Romanticism"[121] which he had been suffering from since his youth. It can also be argued that the main current of his philosophy from *Confessions of a Mask* to *Hōjō no umi* indicates the direction outlined above.

When we discuss Mishima's intention to be in harmony with the Emperor, it is necessary to carefully examine the quotation from Wilde which appears below:

> Still, I am conscious now that behind all this Beauty, satisfying through it be, there is some Spirit hidden of which the painted forms and shapes are but modes of manifestation, and it is with this Spirit that I desire to become in harmony. I have grown tired of the articulate utterances of men and things. The Mystical in Art, the Mystical in Life, the Mystical in Nature – this is what I am looking for

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[119] Mishima, "Mondai teiki (Nihonkoku kenpō)", *Works* 34, p. 321.
[120] *ibid.*, p. 316.
[121] Mishima, "Watashi no henreki jidai", *Works* 30, p. 477.

> and in the great symphonies of Music, in the initiation of Sorrow, in the depths of the Sea I may find it. It is absolutely necessary for me to find it somewhere.[122]

In this quotation from *De Profundis*, the influence of Ruskin's comments on Pre-Raphaelites can be found. Ruskin called for young British artists to return to nature and praised God and his creatures through art. We can say that this attitude was close to Wilde's, who in prison regarded Christ as the best artist. Then we can also detect again the strong link with Mishima in respect of being in harmony with the Absolute as the origin of everything. However, we may also find that in Mishima's case, becoming one with the Absolute was brought about neither by tears nor by absolution. When, with transcendence, one fights against mutability as the natural state of the world and tries to stimulate the spiritual awakening of others and create a better society, one is in harmony with the Absolute.

In his treatise on Wilde, Mishima says that although literary people, such as writers and critics, doubt the effectiveness of linguistic communication, they stake their lives on words. For the twenty five-year-old Mishima, his literary works can be regarded as his battlefields to resolve the dichotomies. However, as he grew older, he did not place his hope in words, because language has root in the seventh sense, *manas*, which is a source of illusion. After changing the plot of *Hōjō no umi*, he stopped dealing with the theme of the Emperor through writing fiction. He carried out his intentions only in a few critical essays and in his private army, *Tate no kai* [The Shield Faction].

To conclude, Mishima regarded the changeable *ālayavijñāna* as the real state of this world through *vijñaptimātratā*. Then, although Mishima believed that *vijñaptimātratā* finally invalidates transmigration, he sought relief in liberation from the circle of reincarnation. Because of the concept of liberation, which can be seen as absurd from an objective viewpoint, he needed the form of "the *novel* to interpret this world"[123] for *Hōjō no umi*. However, he realised that, as compared with phantom-like liberation, mutability was solid. In addition, he found that a quite difficult problem lay between bringing relief to people and liberating oneself. In his struggle with these facts, liberation as relief was fading away; on the other hand, the Emperor increased in

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[122] Wilde, "De Profundis", *Works*, p. 1057.
[123] Mishima, "*Hōjō no umi* ni tsuite", *Works* 34, p. 27, my emphasis.

importance. At that stage, the Emperor was called upon as the Absolute of transcendence who provided continuity of time and space. According to Mishima, this figure of the Emperor was close to the truth in *vijñaptimātratā* and the Great Void in the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming.

Is it possible to become one with the fundamental existence? Is it possible to support other people's spiritual awakening by presenting the Emperor as an existence beyond time and space? Although Mishima sought to be in harmony with the Emperor, he did not examine its actual effect using the concept, "limitation of ethical revolution".[124] He only insists on aiming for this from first to last. From the viewpoint of *vijñaptimātratā*, I think it is considered an excuse to liberate only himself. Because to introduce the Emperor to *vijñaptimātratā* and Confucianism creates an unknown area where no one including Mishima can predict anything, so he was free from any responsibility. However, to risk one's life on something one is unsure of achieving is also the final situation of the hero, Kiyoaki, in the first story of *Hōjō no umi*. I believe that it was a deadly battle of transcendence against mutability for Mishima.

Mishima defined the Emperor as the Absolute beyond time and space and insisted on the need for amendments to the Japanese Constitution to designate the Emperor as the core of the Japanese people and their culture. He believed that to devote one's life to the Emperor as the Absolute reflected the samurai spirit and that the members of the Self-Defence Forces could share this idea with him.[125] As stated in Chapter 5, people in the post-war period never doubted that the economic prosperity of the 1950s and 60s would continue permanently and made efforts to gain higher social status and money during this time. Mishima analysed the post-war period in this way. Therefore, the samurai spirit, which emphasises death and the dedication of one's life for lords, seemed to reflect Mishima's criticism of the code of values in Japanese society. Giving three cheers for the Emperor, Mishima committed *harakiri*. In my opinion, through his death, Mishima showed the finitude of worldly reality, namely, mutability as the nature of this world. Through this, he intended to support other people's spiritual awakening. At the same time, through dedicating his life to the

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[124] In "Dōgiteki kakumei no ronri" [The Logic of Ethical Revolution] (1969), Mishima says that purity and ethical responsibility inevitably include a passive attitude, waiting. Mishima, "Dōgiteki kakumei no ronri", *Works* 32, p. 541.
[125] Mishima Yukio, "Geki" [Manifesto], *Works* 34, pp. 527-8.

Emperor, he was anxious to be in harmony with the Absolute, like a martyr who yearns to be acknowledged through one's martyrdom. Through becoming one with the Absolute beyond time and space, he tried not to be swallowed up by mutability. It was a battle of transcendence, represented by the Emperor, against mutability. I believe that showing this stance on the Absolute through *harakiri* was the final expressive action of Mishima.

Part V: Conclusion

According to the analysis in this part, I find the similarities, parallels and differences in the link between Mishima and Wilde as follows.

As their liking for St. Sebastian demonstrates, both Mishima and Wilde longed to be in harmony with the Absolute. However, the methods they used to achieve this were not completely consistent. Through the actual experience of imprisonment, Wilde understood the steps towards his self-realisation through his strengthened pluralism. They were innocence, descent, sorrow and self-realisation. Then he found out how to bond with others through perceiving their sorrow as his own and to have consideration for them through love. He understood that he should aim for this beauty represented by Christ and that, as an artist, he should describe it from a pluralistic viewpoint. As Christ accepted all kinds of people, he hoped to do so. It means that he was in accord with Christ. He was acknowledged by Christ and was granted comfort and joy in pluralism. This was Wilde's view of the Absolute.

On the other hand, although Mishima's philosophy was similar in some ways to Wilde's, he criticised Wilde's attitude towards the Absolute. He understood Wilde's pluralism and appreciated his sincerity with his pluralistic viewpoint. However, he criticised Wilde's easy self-justification as peace of the soul brought about by anxiety arising from his pluralism. With that arrogant attitude, Wilde's pluralism was only a decoration to make his life outstanding. Mishima believed that Wilde longed for Christ because of his crucifixion. Mishima thought that each person should suffer the result of sin and should not use it as access to the Absolute. He criticised Wilde's expedient view of the Absolute.

However, it is also true that Mishima examined Wilde's attitude towards resolving dichotomy and his call for reform of the social system in English society. Towards the end of his life, Mishima also challenged the Japanese social climate of the post-war period. Therefore, when Mishima wrote the treatise on Wilde, he must have empathised with him in this respect. Using Mishima's words, Wilde's serious accusations of social fraud as an Irishman and a former prisoner were considered the challenge of transcendence. Consequently, Mishima thought if Wilde had continued to investigate his pluralism, he would have come close to Mishima's dualism. Thus,

Mishima was disappointed that Wilde abandoned his search to accept different codes of values and associate with others in his pluralism. If Wilde had carried on with his philosophy, it would have shown Mishima how to resolve the difficult issue between individual liberation and other people's spiritual awakening and the conflict between transcendence and mutability.

Mishima acquired his views of the Absolute through the Japanized doctrines of Wang Yangming and *vijñaptimātratā*, and regarded the Emperor as the Absolute. In Mishima's view, the Absolute was neither situated in the field of mutability nor swallowed up by it. It included all dichotomies and lay in a different dimension from this world of mutability. It was the source of everything. It was a similar concept to the Great Void in the Neo-Confucian doctrines of Wang Yangming and to the truth (*tathatā*) in *vijñaptimātratā*. In his final speech to the Self-Defence Forces, Mishima explained this as the true state of the Emperor, and the importance of harmony with the Absolute in this world of mutability. Mishima had no confidence about whether it was possible to be in harmony with the Absolute and whether he could support other people's spiritual awakening through his own example. However, he kept searching with his transcendence for a way toward people in this world.

Both Mishima and Wilde sought the Absolute and intended to be in harmony with it. In the anxiety arising from his pluralism, Wilde found Christ and tried to empathise with others in sorrow. It also means to be acknowledged by Christ and to be at peace in Christ. On the other hand, Mishima did not isolate himself in the ideal world. He analysed the natural state of this world of mutability and attempted to transcend it through the concept of the Emperor as the Absolute. Through this process, he intended to enlighten people and help their spiritual awakening.

To conclude, through becoming one with the Absolute, Wilde attempted to accept others with their different codes of values. In other words, he intended to bond with others through love represented by Christ. It also meant that he was acknowledged by the Absolute. As a result, he believed that the Absolute brought out comfort and joy in him. On the other hand, through harmony with the Absolute, Mishima tried to transcend changeable phenomena – time and space – in this world. It was a battle between transcendence and mutability. He believed that if he kept facing

the Absolute, he could possibly not be swallowed up by mutability. In fact, the Absolute was tolerance for Wilde, and the field for ascetic training for Mishima.

Conclusion

As stated in the introduction, there has not yet been a great deal of research into the links between Mishima Yukio and Oscar Wilde and a wide area was left untouched. From Chapter 1 to 8, I investigated this theme in the light of their views of the Absolute and believe that I have presented some new perspectives.

First of all, through analysis with a new interpretation of Wilde's *Salomé*, a new link between Mishima's early philosophy and his interest in Wilde emerged. In his youth, Mishima stayed away from the real world and formed his romanticism. That was influenced by his growing up under his grandmother's strict supervision and his love of reading Japanese classics. At that time, Japan was plunged into World War II. Through meeting those who appreciated Japanese tradition, his romanticism intensified and became linked with the concept of death. It can be defined as a tendency towards imaginative longing for something outside worldly reality. Longing for death, he became acquainted with French psychological novels, for instance Radiguet's works. Then, combining them with his own romanticism, he found cynical methods of analysing human nature. The use of these was closely connected with trying to put himself in a solipsistic and all-seeing position like the hero of *Le Bal du comte d'Orgel*. As a result, he formed an interest in transcending this world, and his works show his great desire to dominate the world. Therefore, he viewed Wilde's *Salomé* as a play concerned with the theme of dominance. In the play, the author, symbolised by the moon, controls everything and every character, even Hérode who has great worldly power and Salomé, a seductive woman. Mishima intuitively understood this theme through Beardsley's illustrations. It was enough to attract the young Mishima. He described transcending this world through his sense of death in battle and hoped to be an extraordinary person who could understand everything in this world. However, the war ended and death in battle was no longer possible. He was forced to live in the post-war period. It was difficult for him, because he had lived during wartime with illusions which divorced him from worldly reality through allowing him to dream of the world of Japanese classics or death. He represented the gap between himself and the post-war world as a sexual problem in his novel,

Confessions of a Mask. However, as the plot symbolises, he made up his mind to live in the post-war period and tried to be involved in worldly reality.

Secondly, from a new angle, pluralism and dualism were pointed out as the different foundations of their philosophies. Wilde's Irish background is not frequently dealt with as a significant factor in his life, but, not only in the political sense but also in the religious one, it has greater importance than is generally accepted. Through his complicated background as an Irishman, some dichotomies such as Ireland and England, Catholicism and Protestantism were brought out. Especially, when he thought about conversion to Catholicism, he suffered from great difficulties because of these dichotomies. Wilde's regret for his father's lack of understanding and his sad conversation with his friend symbolised these difficulties. Consequently, the reason why he did not leave many references to his Irish background was not that it was a minor issue for him but that he attempted to distance himself from the dichotomies caused by his Irish background. He intended to avoid being swallowed up by the conflicts found in the dichotomies. Then he was shown how he could resolve these conflicts by visiting Greece and developed his pluralism through his appreciation of J. Newman. Wilde hoped to resolve the dichotomies. With this ideal, he intended to include any contrary ideas and gained his pluralistic viewpoint.

On the other hand, although Mishima also visited Greece, he acquired quite a different basis for his philosophy. After the end of World War II, he made up his mind to be involved with the real world and thought that the spirit and intelligence torment one with illusion. In Greece, he perceived the body as worldly reality which was the opposite concept to the spirit. At this point, he completed the basis of his philosophy. It was dualism between the spirit and the body and between illusion and worldly reality. Then he tried to affirm worldly reality through the body. In his philosophical development from *The Sound of Waves* to *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, it was gradually confirmed. In *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, Mishima analysed worldly reality in front of him and dealt with the difference between wartime and the post-war period. In wartime, the passage of time only passes and never repeats itself. On the contrary, the passage of time in the post-war period is permanent repetition like a circle. As the alienated hero chooses the external being, Mishima also chose worldly reality. As the hero burns the Golden Temple symbolising his inner

time and space, there was no prejudice and discrimination. Works of art represented this ideal state, and it should be the target for people to aim for.

This idea was combined with his attitude towards society. After analysing his Irish background, I am convinced that he felt feelings of guilt about his success in English society and not converting to Catholicism. Therefore, being inspired with by the ideas of another teacher at Oxford, John Ruskin, he turned his pluralism towards the weak in society. In his critical essay, "The Soul of Man Under Socialism", he blames the social system which, through prejudice and discrimination, prevents the development of one's talent. There is a tendency to believe that Wilde was at first moved by Ruskin's humanitarianism, but he eventually chose Pater's aestheticism. However, this was contrary to his pluralism. He never chose one or other of them but blended these teachers' ideas. The Independence of Beauty and exposure to beauty without prejudice and discrimination were his view of art.

Mishima moulded his view of art in his analysis of the post-war period. The main four characters, a boxer, an actor, a painter and a businessman, of his novel, *Kyōko no ie*, intend to be involved with the post-war period in their own ways. Through their attempts, the natural state of worldly reality as a form of disintegration was revealed to Mishima. However, Japanese society, which prospered at that time, lost the sense of worldly reality as disintegration. People never thought about the prosperity of Japanese society coming to an end and made a point of making money. Mishima tried to take part in worldly reality and the post-war period, but he found that they were not the same. When he sought to be part of worldly reality, he came to challenge the code of values of the post-war period. In this respect, his attitude towards society was similar to that of Wilde who complained about fraud in English society in the nineteenth century.

Mishima persistently looked for a way to face worldly reality. In the episode of the daffodil, the inner being changed smoothly into the external being in the flower. He attempted to find the point where the conflict between illusion and worldly reality became extinguished like in this episode. It was quite difficult in the post-war period, and all attempts to be part of worldly reality by the main characters fail. In this process, Mishima let the painter, one of the main characters, draw the sunset. In a manner similar to Wilde, he also believed that art had a role to record change and that

being, Mishima burned his romanticism which represented wartime. This is dualism as the basis of Mishima's philosophy where the concept could not co-exist with its opposite.

Both formed their philosophies of pluralism and dualism and found dichotomies throughout their lives. However, their attempts to resolve them with their philosophies were quite different. In fact, to resolve the dichotomy, Wilde attempted to include opposite concepts, and Mishima tried to extinguish the opposite concept.

Thirdly, the meaning of art in their philosophies was examined and compared with my analysis. What kind of similarities, parallels and differences were there in their views of art? Through visiting Greece, Wilde appreciated the purpose of the Renaissance. He believed it aimed to allow the observer to encounter classic beauty beyond time and space and to create a new kind of beauty through the observation of established beauty. It was evaluated by Mishima, because he agreed with the motto of the magazine, *Bungei bunka*, which studied modern issues through classic works. Wilde's stance was based on his pluralistic viewpoint and was linked with the concept of his teacher at Oxford, Walter Pater, the Independence of Beauty. According to Pater, beauty was fluid and had infinite style, so it was meaningless to define what beauty was. Accordingly, Wilde thought that one could encounter various kinds of beauty in nature or one's daily life. Then integrating one's personality with established beauty gave birth to many kinds of unique beauty. Beauty included these various types of separate beauty. Therefore, in beauty, the diversity of individual concepts of beauty was permitted, and there should no kind of prejudice or discrimination.

For Wilde, art changed individual and unique beauty into perceivable forms for others at the present time and in the future. It permanently recorded changeable beauty and showed it to observers through works of art. In other words, in works of art, beauty emerged into the actual world in permanent forms. In Wilde's opinion, people who created such works of art were artists. Art critics also recorded beauty created by their exposure to works of art and showed them to people. Thus, as he stated in "The Critic as Artist", critics were also artists. According to Wilde's pluralism, when one appreciated other individual beauty through works of art beyond

artists showed their works to observers as targets to aim for. However, there was a great difference between their views. Wilde thought that art recorded and showed beauty, but in Mishima's view art recorded and demonstrated disintegration as the natural state of worldly reality. However, another problem appeared for Mishima. A human being can only perceive objects using compounds as units. For example, when one perceives a forest as a cluster of trees, one cannot recognise smaller elements such as leaves and branches. Inevitably one cannot describe separate disintegration in these small elements in works of art. This is the trap caused by the limits of perception and representation in human ability. However, although other main characters fail to face worldly reality, only the painter sees the daffodil as the point where the conflict between illusion and worldly reality became extinguished. In fact, the painter is given hope to face worldly reality. This demonstrates that Mishima still held out the hope to depict the natural state of worldly reality as a writer who was an artist in the same way as a painter does. In "Patriotism", he chose the February 26th Incident as a setting where illusion accords with worldly reality at a critical time in history and described this from the viewpoint of the human eye. Through this special setting and method with a human body which is destined for disintegration, he intended to represent worldly reality. As Wilde criticised fraud in English society with his feelings of guilt, Mishima, with his feelings of guilt at having survived the war, understood that demonstrating to people the natural state of this world was his duty.

Although both Wilde and Mishima held the view that art had a role to record permanently changing issues, objects to be recorded were different. Wilde thought that beauty should be recorded and Mishima believed that disintegration should be represented. For this purpose, Wilde made art multifaceted and Mishima regarded it as a narrow path to worldly reality avoiding being swallowed up by illusion. As a result, Wilde's interest spread outward and that of Mishima converged inward. This complicated consensus and inconsistency between their views of art were linked with similarities, parallels and differences in their views of the Absolute.

Fourthly, their quest for the Absolute in their philosophies was investigated. It is a major issue why they sought the Absolute. Based on the new analyses in the previous parts of the thesis, I tried to show my interpretation. The main point of the suit between Whistler, with whom Wilde was in close contact, and Ruskin

can be described as a conflict between consciousness of others and respect for originality in works of art. If art attempts to accept different viewpoints as much as possible, it loses its clear code of values and invites chaos. However, if it emphasises creators' intentions as a solid code of values, it rejects other viewpoints. Wilde reached the concept of the multifaceted nature of art in his pluralism, but he was actually swaying between these poles. This parallels his indecision between other opposite concepts such as Ireland and England, Catholicism and Protestantism. He tried to practise his pluralism through accepting different elements, including homosexuality, in his pluralism, and, because of it, he could not find a clear code of values. Wilde described this condition in his multilayered novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Various themes appear here, and each is criticised from other viewpoints. Therefore, this multilayered novel includes different views, and the reader cannot hold up a specific code of values as the right one. This is the main theme of the novel, and Wilde understood that wandering amongst various themes was the correct description of human life because of his pluralism.

In these circumstances, he lost his way and felt anxious. Then a desire to control everything and a longing for a strong controller with a solid code of values developed in him together. These ideas can be found in his play, *Salomé*. Here, he rules the world as the moon and, at the same time, it can be taken to mean that he longed for a strong ruler.

On the other hand, Mishima's quest for the Absolute appeared in the connection between his dualism in the post-war period and *vijñaptimātratā* which is a doctrine of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Mishima assigned illusion and worldly reality to male and female characters in his final work, a tetralogy, *Hōjō no umi*. It helped to clarify the nature of these concepts of transcendence and mutability. As stated, he actually challenged the existing social climate, so his views were close to those of the male characters with transcendence. This affinity was one reason for his homosexuality. In the tetralogy, Mishima objectively analysed the nature of this world and described the defeat and death of the transcendent heroes who fight against mutability. Mutability was composed of a great number of finite events including these heroes' stories. Studying *vijñaptimātratā*, Mishima understood that *ālayavijñāna* was the fundamental sense of this world which absorbed all kinds of

disintegration. However, the endless repetition of finitude means mutability. Mishima described a repetition of the relationship between transcendence and mutability in which transcendence is defeated by mutability. That is the essence of transmigration. When Mishima understood *ālayavijñāna* as this relationship, it was equal to mutability. In fact, mutability was the natural state of this world. This interpretation of this world accorded with that in *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* and in *Kyōko no ie*. In each work, Mishima defined the passage of the time in the post-war period as permanent repetition like a circle and described this world as a series of disintegration. In his final tetralogy, through this belief that mutability is the natural state of this world, any transcendent hope of the characters disappears into mutability and the story ends.

Mishima originally planned to describe a glorious liberation brought out by *vijñaptimātratā*. According to Mishima, this glorious liberation was transcendence and needed this world as a place for ascetic training. As analysed, this world was composed of a great number of finite events, and its natural state was mutability. In fact, liberation was brought about by the integration of transcendence and mutability. He originally planned to depict liberation as a resolution of the conflict between transcendence and mutability. However, faced with the strength of mutability he could not help but abandon his plan like an impossible dream. In fact, liberation was only one of the forms of transcendence which was defeated by mutability. At that time, he needed something situated neither in the field of mutability nor swallowed up by mutability. I believe that it was the Japanese Emperor for Mishima.

Finally, the similarities, parallels and underlying differences between them were examined through their views of the Absolute. This is the first attempt in the comparative study between these authors. Both of them liked St. Sebastian, and the Absolute had an important meaning for them in the final stages of their philosophies. Their different philosophical development brought out Mishima's ambivalent stance on Wilde.

Before his imprisonment, Wilde occasionally referred to self-realisation using the word, Individualism, in his work. Salomé's dance of the seven veils can also be interpreted as a symbol of the process of development of one's talent. As his work written in prison, *De Profundis*, demonstrates, Wilde clearly came to self-realisation through his experience of imprisonment. I arranged it into four steps – innocence,

descent, sorrow and self-realisation. With this idea, he identified Jesus Christ as his goal. Christ became one with others by loving them and showed people love as beauty. This was the ideal for an artist with a pluralistic viewpoint, and Christ was regarded as a solid code of values for Wilde. Wilde earnestly hoped to become like Christ and, in the anxiety arising from his pluralism, to be acknowledged by Him to gain comfort and joy.

In his treatise, "Osukā Wairudo ron", Mishima challenges Wilde's attitude towards the Absolute. Mishima did not seclude himself in the world of illusion and tried to be involved in worldly reality, but Wilde gave up expanding his pluralism because of anxiety. Then he was keen to be acknowledged by Christ to gain peace. Mishima believed this was linked with self-justification and that Wilde's pain in *De Profundis* was not real. Mishima did not understand that absolution was accompanied by regret and sorrow. Reading only the incomplete edition of *De Profundis* was one of the reasons for Mishima's lack of understanding. At the same time, through his study of the rule of cause and effect, Mishima believed that one had to atone for one's sin by oneself. This was the other reason that Mishima considered Wilde's attitude arrogant. Moreover, Mishima thought that Wilde was attracted only by Christ's special destiny of the crucifixion and criticised Wilde's shallow view of the Absolute based on self-justification. In Wilde's view, the Absolute resolved dichotomies, and Wilde intended to become one with the Absolute. It is certain that in these respects, Mishima's views agreed with Wilde's. However, Mishima did not understand the mystery that in absolution the charity of God changed one's sorrow into joy, and that, through forgiveness for others, the charity of God appeared amongst human beings. Mishima regarded Wilde's demanding forgiveness of his sins as insolence and said that God was the final excuse for humans. However, if Wilde had heard of it, he would have objected to Mishima's overestimation of human ability.

Mishima agreed with Wilde's criticism of fraud in English society in the nineteenth century, so he was sorry that, using Christ as a cover, Wilde stopped developing his pluralism and embodying it in society. In the last years of Mishima's life, the gap in Mahāyāna Buddhism between one's own and other people's liberation appeared as quite a difficult problem. How could he support other people's spiritual awakening? How could he embody it in the real world? If Wilde had perfected his

pluralism, it would have greatly helped Mishima. Therefore, I am convinced that Mishima was sorry that Wilde left these issues unsolved and handed himself over to Christ.

For Mishima, the Emperor embodied any kind of conflict, was the root of various things, and transcended time and space. This is called the truth in *vijñaptimātratā* and is a deeper existence than *ālayavijñāna*. It is never swallowed up by mutability. This was Mishima's view of the Absolute. To transcend mutability through ascetic practices, Mishima aimed to be in harmony with the Emperor. He thought that, through showing the Emperor as the Absolute in the process of his quest, he could enlighten and awake others. At that time, transcendence, which transcends mutability through the Emperor, was attained in the field of mutability, and supporting others' spiritual awakening should also be achieved. This was the final resolution of the dichotomies in his philosophy.

Both of them hoped to be in harmony with the Absolute and bond with others through art to bring about a better society. Wilde intended to do this through absolution by Christ and his works which represent the beauty of God's love. Mishima tried to do it through fighting against mutability with transcendence and showing the Emperor as the Absolute which transcended mutability.

From the basis of pluralism, Wilde developed his philosophy and his view of the Absolute, Christ. On the other hand, from the basis of dualism, Mishima formed his philosophy and his view of the Absolute, the Japanese Emperor. As I discussed, there are complicated similarities, parallels and differences between their philosophies, especially in their views of the Absolute. Researching Wilde, Mishima felt deep empathy with and strong antipathy against him in terms of his view of the Absolute. This was the reason that Mishima left positive and negative comments in his treatise. His ambivalent attitude towards Wilde continued until Mishima's suicide. We know this by the fact that Mishima planned a production of *Salomé* after his death and had had some meetings with a theatre company. (Thus we may say that it actually meant a funeral staged by himself.) At that time, although in Mishima's unique interpretation, the moon as the dominator represented the Emperor as the Absolute, it is certain that Wilde did not disappear from Mishima's mind. Wilde's philosophy was not

completely consistent with Mishima's. However, because of it, it was a major theme for Mishima, and his interest in Wilde was intensified.

As stated in the introduction to this thesis, Mishima loved Wilde's work and must have been influenced by him. However, the links between them have not yet been studied sufficiently, and a wide area still needs to be researched. How did their philosophies match? How did they differ? Using Mishima's ambivalent attitude, especially his positive and negative comments in his treatise on Wide, as a beginning, I investigated these issues from new angles above, their views of the Absolute. I hope that my study could contribute to raising awareness of the similarities, parallels and differences between them. Moreover, Wilde influenced other Japanese writers. Consequently, I hope this study will make a contribution to the general comparative field of relationships between Japanese and Western literature.

Appendices

1. Irish History and Speranza

In the twelfth century, after the war against the Vikings, many civil wars took place between the Kings in Ireland. In 1166, the King of Leinster, Diarmait MacMurchada (Dermot MacMurrough) asked the King of England, Henry II, for help. This request was very convenient for Henry II who had been hoping to acquire territory in Ireland. This triggered the conquest of Ireland by Anglo-Norman and Irish lords in 1171. Then this control by the King of England accelerated, until in 1250, Norman barons under the English sovereign ruled over two-thirds of Ireland. After that, although there were some periods when its level of influence decreased, England expanded its power by degrees.

In the fifteenth century, England enacted a new system to govern Ireland which put the representative of English king in Ireland. England had sovereign power over Ireland and banned the Anglo-Normans from using Gaelic and from intermarrying with the Irish. However, in that century, the area of land which was controlled by England decreased in size. Therefore, the Irish court governed Ireland in place of the governor-general. However, the Tudor Dynasty intended to re-establish control, because the strategic importance of Ireland increased in Europe. In 1494, Henry VII removed the Irish Lord Deputy and promoted an Englishman to that post. This can be called the turning-point in English policy to control Ireland. In fact, before that, although England had controlled Ireland, it implemented a kind of isolation policy which separated the English and Irish populations, so Irish culture was permitted to some degree. However, it changed into anglicisation of the whole of Ireland. In these circumstances, Henry VIII ascended the throne. His assumption of power led to serious religious problems in Ireland.

Taking the title of King of Ireland in 1536, he attempted to carry out the Reformation in Ireland which he had already completed in England. The conference of the Reformation held in Dublin decided on the dissolution of the monasteries and convents and the confiscation of church property. However, these decisions were carried out only in those cities where England had control. In the rest of the country, the Irish people were against these decisions for religious reasons. In addition, even Anglo-Norman landowners were against them, because they were afraid of losing their property in the future. Moreover, some landowners had already married the daughters of Irish aristocratic families. Most of them who were against the conference's decision converted to Catholicism, so the situation became more complicated. It caused a war between Ireland and England. However, in 1600, the army of the union of landowners in Ireland led by Hugh O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone, was defeated by Elizabeth I's troops. After that, the landowners of the northern part of Ireland gave up their territories, and James I, who succeeded Elizabeth I in 1603, let members of the Anglican Church emigrate to the Ulster area. As a result, there were many Protestants in this area. At the same time, the Anglican Church (Church of Ireland) was reaffirmed as the state church. It also meant that the northern part of Ireland had become quite different from the rest of the country, in both religion and culture.

The seventeenth century in Ireland can be called a century of blood. There were many civil wars and conflicts between the Irish and the English, the Catholics

and the Protestants, and the Royalists and the Parliament. In addition, many rebellions took place in Scotland. There were many battles all over Great Britain. At the same time, this allowed the Irish who had lost their property through English immigration to recover their power. In 1641, the Catholics, whose properties had been confiscated, rebelled against the government. It spread over all Ulster, and many English immigrants were massacred. How they should suppress this rebellion caused a confrontation between the Royalists and the Parliament. Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) executed Charles I in 1649, established republicanism and attacked Ireland which was seen as the home of the Catholics and the Royalist army. It is likely that this attack meant the end of Cromwell's war against the monarchy and revenge for the massacre of 1641. Bloody massacres took place in many places such as Drogheda and Wexford. As a result, the Catholic landholders were exiled to Western Ireland, and control by England was complete.

Royal rule returned in 1660 under Charles II. The rule of his brother, James II, in 1685 also led to a conflict between the Catholics and the Protestants. He was a Catholic and intended to protect the Catholics, but he was opposed by many Protestants in England. Exiled to France by the Glorious Revolution in 1688, he went to Ireland with the army of Louis XIV. The Catholics in Ireland supported him, and the Irish and their French allies fought against William III's army. However, they were defeated in the Battle of the Boyne, west of Drogheda in 1690. William III concluded the Treaty of Limerick which permitted Catholic worship and confirmed Catholic believers' social status, but the English Parliament did not ratify it; it was never actually enacted.

This gave rise to the social concept in Ireland that Protestants are superior to Catholics. Oppressed by William III, the Catholics were deprived of their political and economic rights by law. For example, Catholic worship was banned, they were not allowed to become teachers, and were excluded from the Irish Parliament. As for their land, various prohibitions were enacted. As a result, the status of Protestants as landowners and Catholics as tenants was established. In addition, the Catholics were deprived of their right to vote in 1727. Therefore, the Irish Parliament was monopolised by the Protestants.

After the 1750s, the relationship between Ireland and England became more complicated. At that time, the English Parliament had a right to enact laws in Ireland. It enacted some laws which banned Irish people from exporting some items, such as wool and domestic animals to England, because these competed with English goods. The Protestant members of the Irish Parliament were unhappy with these laws, and an anti-government movement developed. The War of Independence in America in 1775-83 greatly encouraged the Protestants in Ireland to demand free trade and an amendment to the laws passed by the Parliament. Ireland gained independence in 1782, and during the war between England and Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), the restriction of the Catholics' rights had gradually been relaxed. They recovered their right to enter university and to possess land, but political restrictions on the Irish, who had demanded freedom and equality, remained. In 1791, to release the Catholics from political restrictions and reform the Parliament, the United Irishmen movement was established. Their method was very radical, and they rose up in arms in 1798. The English army succeeded in suppressing this uprising, but the English Parliament feared the people's power. They suggested a plan for integrating the English and Irish Parliaments.

In 1800, the Act of Union was enacted, and the Irish Parliament disappeared. It meant that Ireland was absorbed by Britain. As a result, from 1801 till 1921, the Irish neither had their own parliament, nor were they protagonists in the government of Ireland. For example, a linen industry developed, especially in the northern part of Ireland, but that of cotton was restrained by government policy, because it competed with the domestic industry in England. Moreover, the industrial revolution had little effect on the south of Ireland and most people were engaged in agriculture on farms owned by absent English landowners. Generally speaking they were very poor.

It was likely that Irish Parliament members, who were Protestants, would accept the status quo to maintain their social status and their rights. Some of them had seats in the English Parliament. However, it is clear that the integration of the English and Irish Parliaments led to confusion in Ireland. The members of Parliament had to stay in London most of the year; consequently they could not help becoming absent landowners. Most Catholics in Ireland were engaged in agriculture, and most of them suffered from poverty as tenants under absent landowners. The Catholics' discontent grew, and hostility between the Catholics and Protestants in Ireland became more and more serious. The leader of the Catholic movement, which had demanded total independence, was Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847) who has been dealt with in Chapter 2. In 1828, he was elected to Parliament, but the government did not allow him to take his seat, the reason being that he was a Catholic, and the law prohibited Catholics from holding public office. However, demonstrations supporting O'Connell occurred in various places in Ireland. They demanded that the government permit O'Connell to take his seat. In 1829, the government amended the law and gave him a seat in Parliament. Then O'Connell aimed for greater self-government in Ireland. However, his campaign was suppressed and he was arrested in 1843. During these incidents, Young Ireland was established, and Speranza began to be involved in the movement, as was said in Chapter 2.

The central basis which sustained English power was racial prejudice towards the Irish. When Henry II's son, John, became the King of Ireland, Giraldus Cambrensis (Gerald of Wales) (1146? -1223?), Henry's vassal and clergyman, went to Ireland with him. Giraldus wrote a book, *Topographia Hibernica*, based on that experience and asserted that Irish people were barbarians who lived like animals, and were dishonest people who distorted the doctrine of Christianity.[1] It is clear that this book written in the twelfth century shows the contemptuous attitude of the English towards Irish people. Giraldus appreciated Irish music, but those who intended to conquer Ireland in the sixteenth century extracted from his book convenient quotations to back sending an army there. These ideas were adopted in many political and cultural situations. In addition, Koike Shigeru analyses prejudice, which is related to Giraldus' reference, in John Milton's (1608-74) works.[2] In the nineteenth century, when Speranza lived, this racial prejudice became widespread. The great historian, Edward Augustus Freeman (1823-69), states his view in a letter from the United States, "This would be a grand land if only every Irishman would kill a negro, and be hanged for

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[1] Giraldus Cambrensis, "The Topography of Ireland; Its Miracles and Wonders.", *The Historical Works of Giraldus Cambrensis*, translated by Thomas Forester (London: H. G. Bohn, 1863), pp. 121-6.
[2] Koike Shigeru, *Mōhitotsu no Igirisushi: No to machi no monogatari* [Another History of Britain: The Story of the Suburbia and the Cities] (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1991), p. 97.

it."[3] It is not easy for me to say how much truth there is in this idea of English prejudice towards the Irish at that time in those episodes. It requires more materials and knowledge to make an informed decision and is outside the aims of this appendix. However, it is certain that racial prejudice towards the Irish existed.

Speranza showed her views in a dramatic way in the trial of Charles Gavan Duffy (1816-1903), one of the founders of Young Ireland. Thomas Osborne Davis (1814-45), another founder of Young Irealnd, died during the Great Famine, and Irish lawyer Daniel O'Connell's attempt to solve the problems legally between Ireland and England failed. Duffy was arrested and tried for treason. Speranza wrote an article for *The Nation* (29 Jul 1848) whose title is "Jacta Alea Est" [The Die is Cast]. This article encouraged Irish people to arms and to fight for their liberty. She writes the following:

> "We appeal to the whole Irish Nation – is there any man amongst us who wishes to take one further step on the base path of sufferance and slavery? Is there one man that thinks that Ireland has not been sufficiently insulted, that Ireland has not been sufficiently degraded in her honour and her rights, to justify her now in fiercely turning upon her oppressor?[4]
>
> The Castle is the key-stone of English power; take it, destroy it, burn it – at any hazard become masters of it, [...].[5]

George Woodcock says this is "flatulent ranting" and "tawdry medallions".[6] However, apart from its literary value, it made a big impact on the Viceroy of Ireland and his administration in Dublin Castle. The Castle authorities immediately suppressed the article and used it as evidence to reinforce Duffy's guilt. Duffy, who was in Kilmainham prison, was indicted again for this article. It is said that on the day of his trial, the court was crowded with many people who sympathised with him. At the climax of a scathing speech by the public prosecutor, a young lady stood up in the public gallery and cried out:

> "I am the criminal who, as the author of the article that had just been read, should be in the dock," [...] "Any blame in respect of it belongs to me."[7]

The young girl was Speranza. This is a well-known incident, but there is no evidence to guarantee that it was true. Therefore, it is considered a dramatised fiction. Either way, in this complicated situation, the jurymen were confused, and, as a result, Duffy was released. It was likely that the Castle authority was afraid of Speranza's popularity, and they decided not to indict her. This incident is found in almost all books which

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[3] W. R. W. Stephens, B. D., *The Life and Letters of Edward A. Freeman,* Vol. II (London: Macmillan and Co., 1895), p. 242.
[4] Robert Harborough Sherard, *The Life of Oscar Wilde* (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1906) P.53. One copy of this article, which escaped from suppression, is stored at the National Library of Dublin. It is printed in No.304 of *The Nation* which was published in Dublin on 29 July 1848. It is probably the only one which exists.
[5] *ibid.*, p. 60.
[6] George Woodcock, *The Paradox of Oscar Wilde* (London: T. V. Bourdham & Co., Ltd, 1949), p. 25.
[7] Horace Wyndham, *Speranza: A Biography of Lady Wilde* (London: T.V. Boardman & Company Limited, 1951), p. 37.

deal with her. It is said that after this dramatic scene, she had became one of the most popular people in Dublin.

Young Ireland established in 1842 demanded that the English Parliament decide on an economic policy to ease the Great Famine. The government advisers wrongly imagined the Famine was over, so, in 1848, some Young Irelanders rose in revolt to establish a new government. This revolt was suppressed, and they could not fulfil their aims, but it had influenced many people. In 1858, the Irish Republican Brotherhood was formed, and its sister organisation, the Fenian Brotherhood, was founded in the U.S.A. Both of these groups attempted to end English rule and to gain Irish independence. This movement became a significant threat. It became more and more radical, and in 1867, the members rose in revolt. Ireland had received little Government attention since 1852. The English government needed radical measures to address the causes of Irish discontent. Consequently, it is said that William Gladstone changed his policy and enacted some laws in 1870, 1881 and 1882 relating to the Irish people's right to their land. These changes can be defined as the beginning of the road to the Republic of Ireland which was established in 1949.

2. Wilde and the Pre-Raphaelites

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was set up by John Everett Millais (1827-96), Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-82) and William Holman Hunt (1827-1910) when they were university students. They objected to the method of painting taught to students at their university and aimed to return to the medieval technique of drawing. Millais' picture, *Ophelia* (1852) at the Tate Gallery in London, clearly shows this approach. In this picture, the character, Ophelia, from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is drawn. She is said good-bye by Hamlet, and her father is killed. Racked with grief, she falls into the river and drowns. To draw Ophelia in the river, Millais had the model, Elizabeth Siddal (1829-62) soak, in the bathtub for a long time and then sketched her. This made her ill. This episode demonstrates the seriousness of his approach. It is said that from the background landscapes to the small still lives, they drew everything using concrete models. The lively and visionary mood in their paintings was created by this method and their serious attitude towards creating works of art.

At the end of the 1850s, William Morris (1834-96) and Edward Coley Burne-Jones (1833-98) joined them, and this became the group's golden age. In this period, Wilde became interested in the movement of the Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood. His critical art essay, "The Grosvenor Gallery" (1877), shows his interest in it. This work is written in the style of a report about the opening exhibition of the gallery which took place on 1 May 1877. The gallery was established by Sir Coutts Lindsay and his wife Blanche. They were also amateur painters who supported young artists who were not popular and were not accepted by the Royal Academy. Introducing the pictures, Wilde refers to the works of art by Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt (1827-1910), Millais, and George Frederic Watts (1817-1904). (Watts was not strictly a member of the group, but in terms of mutual influence, he was regarded as one of them in a broad sense.) Amongst these painters, Wilde admires Burne-Jones and Hunt. He called them "probably the greatest masters of colour that we have ever had in England, with the single exception of Turner".[8] As for Watts, he also praises him. He said, "Watts's power, on the other hand, lies in his great originative and imaginative genius, and he reminds us of Æschylus or Michaelangelo [(1475-1564)] in the startling vividness of his conceptions."[9] When he wrote this work, he was a student at Oxford immediately after his return from Greece via Rome. Therefore, it is clear that his opinion is affected by the strong impression made by Michelangelo's works of art which he had seen in Rome. Taking this fact into account, he regarded them highly. It demonstrates that Wilde's concept of beauty was similar to that of the Pre-Raphaelites.

In addition, Wilde found the movement's beliefs very helpful. They resisted the conventions of the Royal Academy which imitated the styles and the methods of giants like Raphael. They raised objections to this tradition and started to paint from nature. This story reminded Wilde of the difficult situation between Ireland and England or between Catholicism and Protestantism. Through many bitter experiences, he reached his pluralism which permitted all diversity. Thus, according to him, the Pre-Raphaelites' beliefs were acceptable, and the policy of the Royal Academy, which regarded itself as the only authority, was clearly wrong.

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[8] Wilde, "The Grosvenor Gallery, 1877", *Miscellanies, FCE,* p. 6.
[9] *ibid.*, p. 7.

3. Victorian Society and Ruskin

There are records of epidemics of cholera in places around Oxford in the nineteenth century. They occurred at least four times in 1832, 1848, 1853 and 1866. This shows us the lack of public health and delay by the government in providing sanitation. In the 1850s, the population of Oxford was approximately 25,000, but the water supply was piped to just a limited number of wealthy inhabitants. Because of the restricted water-supply, in most working-class districts there were insufficient drainage and no toilets. Therefore, working-class people drew water from the river. On the other hand, the sewage from the wealthier households poured directly into the river, so the quality of water in the river was very poor. The Poor Law Commissioners, among them Edwin Chadwick (1803-90), submitted reports about sanitary conditions among the working population. In their third report of 1842,[10] they point out that the various forms of epidemic disease in the working-class areas were caused by atmospheric impurities. The working-class population lived in close and overcrowded conditions, and lack of sanitation led to decomposition of animal and vegetable substances in damp and filthy air. Residential areas were located on marshy ground, and these areas were called slums, the original meaning of which is wet mire. Some vice-chancellors of the universities, landowners and mill owners complained about this situation to the government. However, it is said that the reason for their complaints was not to save people who were suffering from a poor water-supply but to protect their fishing rights and water for processing fabrics.

An equally serious problem was that of the lack of official welfare. For example, working conditions in the nineteenth century were dreadful. When workers lost their employment, they did not receive any support from the government, such as unemployment allowances, assistance in securing other jobs and job training. The Poor Law, referred to above, was still far from the stage where it could be called social welfare. Eric Hobsbawm points out the awful situation of working-class people in Victorian society in his book.[11] Their living and working conditions were very poor, so many workers lost their jobs due to injury and illness. However, they could not receive governmental support. The lack of social welfare for people who had lost their jobs caused terrible scenes of child labour. Children were employed to support their family. It is said that the industrial revolution owed much to child labour. Until laws were passed in 1802 and 1819, many children worked sixteen hours per day under atrocious conditions, such as in mines and textile factories. Even after the establishment of Short Time Committees at the beginning of the 1830s and of a royal commission by the Whigs in 1833, children under eleven worked eight hours per day and those over eleven worked twelve hours. However, the acts applied only to textile factories. Thus, in the iron and coal mines, the hideous situation continued. It is said that children started work at age five and died there before the age of twenty-five. Only in 1847 was a law limiting the working time of adults and children enacted, but the limit was still ten hours per day for both adults and children.

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[10] Great Britain *Poor Law* Commission, *Report to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department from the Poor Law Commissioners on an Inquiry into the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* (London: W. Clowes & Sons for H. M. S. O, 1842).
[11] Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire: From 1750 to the Present Day* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969).

In this type of society, Ruskin gave lectures at the Working Men's College from 1854 to 1858. This college was established by John Frederick Dennison Maurice (1805-72) who was a Christian socialist and clergyman of the Anglican Church.

In those days, a climate of public opinion was forming which regarded the poor as idle and coarse. It regarded the reason of their poverty as their loose way of life. If a form of social welfare were in place, they would rely upon it more. As a result, they would become more idle and coarse. *Self Help* (1859) by Samuel Smiles (1812-1904), which was one of the most popular books of that century, was used to support this opinion. It stresses the importance of diligence, thriftness and earnestness, and was employed as a warning for the poor. It was useful to conceal the indifference of the wealthy towards the poor and social welfare. Its spiritualism also concealed the actual solution for the real problems of English society. One of the most important movements trying to solve these problems was the Settlement House Movement, which spread in the 1880s. This movement aimed to raise living standards by co-operation between its supporters and the residents in each area. It was a feature of this movement that its supporters lived in the community with the inhabitants. This helped their mutual understanding. The movement was founded and supported by middle-class young people, and most of them were directly influenced by Ruskin and Arnold Toynbee (1852-83), who was an economic historian and a tutor of Balliol College, Oxford. For example, one of the pioneers of this movement, Edward Dennison (1840-70), was influenced by Ruskin at Oxford. Then he went to the slums in London and lived among the poor there. Samuel Barnett (1844-1913) was also influenced by Ruskin at Oxford. He was a clergyman of the Anglican Church and became vicar of St. Jude's, Whitechapel, in the London slums. He and his wife devoted themselves to establishing the first settlement house in London. It opened on Christmas Eve in 1884 and was named Toynbee Hall. These facts demonstrate that the Settlement House Movement was rooted in Ruskin's philosophy and was a practical demonstration of his thinking in actual society. To comply with his beliefs, Ruskin became actively involved with society and attempted to change the social climate that placed excessive emphasis on human beings as the centre of the universe.

In addition, William Morris (1834-96) deserves to be mentioned here. He not only belonged to the Pre-Raphaelites but also made an effort to actually put into practise Ruskin's ideas. In his later years, he protested against the suppression of the unemployed and the crackdown on Ireland by the English government and formed the Socialist League in 1884. This shows us he was a socialist. However, perhaps he is better known as the pioneer of the Arts and Crafts movement. This movement started at the International Exhibition in London in 1851. This Exhibition showed visitors the fruits and products of the industrial revolution. It is said that Morris complained about industrial design. He was anxious about the disappearance of craftsmen's skills because of the advent of mass production. He later founded Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. with his friends such as Rossetti and Burne-Jones in 1861. He aimed to give up useless decoration and to produce elaborate designs created by craftsmen's careful work. This is called the Arts and Crafts movement. This name came from the title of their first exhibition which was held in 1888. They made furniture, tapestries, stained glass, fabrics, and wallpapers with the new designs, and won an award at the London Fair in 1862. Although their products were still expensive for ordinary people and were not available to all, they laid the foundation for works of art for practical use in the twentieth century. It is clear that this movement was influenced by Ruskin who

gave lectures at the Working Men's College. Morris' ideas overlapped Ruskin's as is shown in his work, "the noblest art is an exact unison of the abstract value, with the imitative power, of forms and colours."[12] Moreover, the ideas for their designs were taken from the patterns of medieval art, oriental art and nature, and they attempted to blend them. Their integral approach was also close to Ruskin's views.

Wilde mentions Morris' group as craftsmen who make "Nature" better, at the beginning of his critical essay, "The Decay of Lying". This demonstrates Wilde's great interest in their new approach and Ruskin's ideas. A similar view is found in Wilde's lectures in the United States, such as "House Decoration" (1882) and "Art and the Handicraftsman" (1882). In these lectures, introducing the famous episode of his meeting with Ruskin already referred to, Wilde talked about the embodiment of beauty through art. This insistence on integrating abstract value and actual scenes was the same as Ruskin's and Morris'. In his poem, "The Garden of Eros" (1881), Wilde appreciates Morris, "Morris, our sweet and simple Chaucer's child," and Morris "has brought fair flowers meet to make an earthly paradise."[13] This praise and his friendship with Morris reinforce how close their opinions were. Both of them acquired these ideas from Ruskin and developed their thinking from there.

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[12] Ruskin, "The Stones of Venice, Volume II", Cook and Wedderburn (eds.), *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 10, p. 216.
[13] Oscar Wilde, "The Garden of Eros", *CW*, Volume I, p. 132.

4. The Case of Ruskin v. Whistler

This suit is generally regarded as an early example of judging artistic value in court. Similar cases were brought to suit in the twentieth century. However, apart from the drawing technique dealt with in Chapter 6, we find another point of this suit is how the price of a painting should be decided.

Through quotations from Ruskin's writings, his viewpoint can be clarified. He believed that the price of a work of art should be decided by the sum of time and effort spent creating it. In the manuscript outlining his philosophy, he also says, "[artists] ask from the public only a just price for his work."[14] That is to say, he criticised Whistler's painting because, although it had not involved much labour, it had been set at a high price. According to this viewpoint, the attitude of artists towards creating works of art is important. If they devote a long time to a subject, their works should be highly priced. This must be the reason why although he believed the Burne-Jones' works had some technical faults, he shows his appreciation of them in the same article in *Fors Clavigera*.

It is easy to imagine that when Ruskin criticised Whistler's work in the Grosvenor Gallery, he was quite busy, visiting Venice, writing many books, teaching at Oxford as the Slade Professor and being involved in many kinds of social works for the poor. Moreover, when he wrote the article about the Grosvenor Gallery, he was badly affected by his wife's elopement with Millais. However, the quotations above demonstrate not only an outlet for his anger but his strong faith. His view of the price of a work of art was related to the social circumstances of the time. At that time, because of the spread of industrialisation wealthy financiers came into existence. They also entered the art market, and because of their money, the price of works of art spiralled. Wealthy people tried to show their eye for beauty by buying works of art. It is quite natural that works of art should change into merchandise and objects of speculation. It was a scramble for people who intended to foster young people with artistic talent. In the manuscript, Ruskin appears seriously worried about this situation, as shown by the following:

> the confusion between art and manufacture, which, lately encouraged in the public mind by vulgar economists, has at last, in no small manner, degraded the productions even of distinguished genius into marketable commodities, [...] The nineteenth century may perhaps economically pride itself on the adulteration of its products and the slackness of its industries. [15]

Because of the tendency to put the economy ahead of all else, he had been anxious that art, which had a noble aim to enlighten people, had lost its proper objective. He considered the function of critics as being "to distinguish the artist's work from the upholsterer's".[16] This means he wishes to preserve art's true objectives and safeguard it from such a mercantile approach.

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[14] John Ruskin, Appendix: "My Own Article on Whistler", Cook and Wedderburn (eds.), *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 29, p. 586. When the suit was held, Ruskin was not well enough to attend it. He handed his manuscript to his firm.
[15] *ibid.*, p. 587.
[16] *loc. cit.*

It is said that Whistler was informed of the article by his friend, George H. Boughton, who was an American painter at their club.[17] Then he conferred with the lawyer, James Anderson Rose (1819-90), and decided to bring a case. Rose sent Ruskin a writ, and Ruskin received it on 8 August 1877. It is probable that it was a difficult decision for Whistler to sue Ruskin, because Ruskin was an authority in the artistic world and enjoyed a good reputation in Victorian society. On the other hand, although his works began to sell at high prices, Whistler was only one of the up-and-coming painters. The reason why he decided to go to court seemed to be worry about his credibility as a painter. Ruskin questioned Whistler's technique and attitude towards drawing. If Whistler had passed Ruskin's criticism in that article, it could have become a serious threat to Whistler's concept of art. He became regarded as a dishonest painter and lost his credibility and social status as an artist. Ruskin's criticism would influence Whistler's standing among galleries and collectors of works of art. It would also influence the price of his established works. The article about this suit in *The Times* shows, "Since the publication of Mr. Ruskin's criticism he had not been able to get the same price for his pictures."[18] Because of this threat to his credibility as an artist and the economic gains to be made as a professional artist, he sued Ruskin, a leading authority in the field.

As stated in Chapter 4, Ruskin's concept of art is quite clear. It is a return to nature. However, when he comments not only on correct drawing technique but also on artists' humility and awe of nature, his standard of criticism could not help but be subjective. Some scholars such as James Laver and Tim Hilton indicate confusion and indulgence of Ruskin's criticism.[19] They are perhaps caused by this ideal viewpoint of his. We may find his moral view, which considered art as showing artists' awe of nature through representing the beauty of objects, in his revulsion against Japanese art. For example, to emphasise the beauty of objects, *ukiyoe*, a genre of Japanese paintings by such as Utamaro (1753-1806) and Hokusai (1760-1849), uses the techniques of abstraction and deformation. As compared with real life, a woman in *ukiyoe* has a bigger face. When Mt. Fuji is drawn in *ukiyoe*, it is depicted in simplified layouts like the scenery in plays. In fact, *ukiyoe* is a genre trying to make independent beauty from actual objects. Consequently, generally speaking, the value of *ukiyoe* is judged not by skill in drawing from nature but by the novel ideas of artists in drawing objects. The same is true of the evaluation of French impressionist paintings and those of Whistler's. For example, regarding the meaning of "Arrangement" in the titles of his works, in the court he stated that it meant arrangement of light, form and colour.[20] How to mix them and recompose them was a major theme for him. It is well known that the photo became popular in the late nineteenth century. It had been a threat to painting as a genre of art, and it is easy to imagine that many painters doubted the value of realism as a painting technique. This must be one of the reasons that people were attracted by abstraction and deformation such as in Japanese paintings and impressionist works of art. These works had meaning as analogies to this world and aimed at creating different worlds. This idea was similar to Whistler's which sought its

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[17] Merrill, *A Pot of Paint, Aesthetics on Trial in Whistler v. Ruskin*, p. 57.
[18] John Ruskin, Appendix: "Whistler v. Ruskin" (Article in *The Times*, 25 November 1878), Cook and Wedderburn (eds.), *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 29, p. 581.
[19] James Laver, *Whistler* (2nd ed.: London: Faber and Faber, 1951), pp. 150-1; and Tim Hilton, *John Ruskin: The Later Years* (New Heaven, Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 188-9.
[20] Ruskin, Appendix: "Whistler v. Ruskin" (Article in *The Times*, 25 November 1878), Cook and Wedderburn (eds.), *The Works of John Ruskin,* Vol. 29, p. 581.

own arrangement of light, form and colour. Moreover, he was greatly interested in Japanese art and drew some pictures which show the influence of Japanese art forms. In *Symphony in White No. 2: The Little White Girl* (1864), the model holds a Japanese fan. In *Caprice in Purple and Gold No. 2: The Golden Screen* and in *Rose and Silver: The Princess from the Land of Porcelain,* models are drawn dressed in Japanese traditional style. The layouts of these pictures also seem to have some common ground with *ukiyoe*. These facts demonstrate that Whistler had begun to realise the importance of abstraction and deformation in drawing technique. Although they were regarded by Ruskin as cutting corners, Whistler's works in the Grosvenor Gallery were based on these new techniques and a new concept of art.

When we see his works of art dealing with the river Thames, we clearly find a change of mood. In the 1850s, at the start of his life in London, he drew landscapes of ports on the river using a realistic technique. They were lively with factories and many kinds of ships. However, he abandoned such a realistic drawing technique in the 1860s. He seemed to begin to understand landscape as a harmony of light and colour. For example, the paintings which have the word, *Nocturne*, in their titles have very soft lines and convey a foggy impression. It can be said they express a similar idea to Impressionism. Especially in *Nocturne in Black and Gold,* which Ruskin criticised, we can see abstraction and deformation as a new drawing technique for Whistler. Perhaps Ruskin denied this new idea of art. However, it was a powerful trend at a new stage of artistic development. The commercialisation of works of art was also inevitable in the process of modernisation. After this suit, he retired from the post of the Slade Professor in 1879 and left the frontline of art criticism. He returned to his old position in 1883, but only for one year. I think he had understood that his philosophy no longer fitted the new art scene.

5. Dandyism: Wilde and Whistler

In Chapter 4, I examined Whistler's view of art and his influence on Wilde philosophy. We also find another connection between Wilde and Whistler. As stated in Chapter 2, Wilde saw John Boyle O'Reilly in Boston in 1882. He was one of his mother's friends, one of the leaders of the Irish national movement and a member of the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States. He was also the editor of the weekly newspaper, *The Boston Pilot*, and in it published Wilde's poem, "Rome Unvisited". It was Wilde's first published work in the United States. Ronald Anderson and Anne Koval's book tells that when Whistler went to Paris via London in 1855, he met O'Reilly on the ship and they had been on friendly terms for one and a half years during his staying at Paris.[21] Then, although O'Reilly moved to London in 1860, they revived their friendship after Whistler moved to London in 1862.[22] There is no evidence that Whistler supported the Irish Republican Brotherhood. It was founded in 1858, and O'Reilly joined in the mid-1860s. However, it is probable that Whistler, whose family on his father's side was Irish, sympathized with O'Reilly. Therefore, it can also be argued that when O'Reilly saw Wilde in Boston, he talked about Whistler to the son of Speranza. It increased Wilde's interest in Whistler. When Wilde first referred to Whistler's works of art at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877, he did not think much of them. Nevertheless, after returning from the United States, his opinion of Whistler improved. When Wilde married in 1884, he asked Whistler to design the interior of his new house in London. This demonstrates how he greatly admired Whistler and his art. Perhaps their common acquaintance, O'Reilly, played a part in this. If this is true, their similar positions as up-and-coming artists with an Irish background in Britain probably provided closer links.

However, their views were not wholly consistent. We may find clear evidence of this in Whistler's lecture, "Ten O'Clock", and Wilde's comments on it. This lecture was held on 20 February 1885 at Prince's Hall in London. In this lecture, Whistler discussed his principles as an artist in the artistic world of that time. He carefully wrote the script with his pupil, Walter Sickert, and designed the tickets and the posters on his own. The number in the audience was about 500. Wilde attended with his wife and was seated in the centre block of row six.[23] At the beginning of the lecture, Whistler says:

> If familiarity can breed contempt, certainly Art – or what is currently taken for it – has been brought to its lowest stage of intimacy.
>
> The people have been harassed with Art in every guise, and vexed with many methods as to its endurance. They have been told how they shall love Art, and live with it. Their homes have been invaded, their walls covered with paper, their very dress taken to task – until, roused at last, bewildered and filled with the doubts and discomforts of senseless suggestion, they resent such intrusion, and cast forth the false prophets, who have brought the very name of the beautiful into disrepute, and derision upon themselves.[24]

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[21] Ronald Anderson and Anne Koval, *James McNeill Whistler: Beyond the Myth* (London: John Murray Ltd., 1994), p. 41 and p. 47.
[22] *ibid.*, pp. 110-1.
[23] *ibid.*, p. 266.
[24] James McNeill Whistler, "Mr. Whistler's 'Ten O' Clock'", *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*

This reference refered to the Arts and Crafts movement developed by William Morris, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Edward Coley Burne-Jones. As was said in Chapter 4, they founded Morris, Marshall, Foulkner Co. in 1861. It aimed to improve the standard of ordinary people's lives through the supply of elaborate goods produced by craftsmen. Whistler did not accept this idea. We can say that this movement was influenced by Ruskin's view of society. Therefore, these words also showed a criticism of Ruskin. As stated, although Whistler won the case, he was ordered to pay his legal costs by the court. As a result, he was declared bankrupt and had to leave Britain. This lecture was held after Whistler returned to Britain from Venice in 1880. Thus, it is easy to understand he wished to avenge himself on Ruskin. However, because of this, his views on art became narrow. Although their stance on realism and views on the time devoted to works of art were different, both believed that anyone could experience many types of beauty through works of art. However, antipathy to Ruskin influenced Whistler. A quotation given below clarifies the change in his thinking:

> And when the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry, as with a veil, and the poor buildings lose themselves in the dim sky, and the tall chimneys become campanili, and the warehouses are palaces in the night, and the whole city hangs in the heavens, and fairy-land is before us – then the wayfarer hastens home; the working man and the cultured one, the wise man and the one of pleasure, cease to understand, as they have ceased to see, and Nature, who, for once, has sung in tune, sings her exquisite song to the artist alone, her son and her master – her son in that he loves her, her master in that he knows her.[25]

In this quotation he insisted that only artists could understand beauty. At the trial, he said that his works of art allowed observers to interpret them using various approaches. It means he wanted to allow as many as possible to experience his works of art. However, eight years later, he insisted on the opposite. This change perhaps had come from his keen rivalry with Wilde. Wilde believed that beauty and observers met and through works of art created new types of beauty together. It is true that this view degraded the status of works to mere instruments for observers to understand beauty. In "The Critic as Artist" (1890), Wilde has one of the characters say, "For the material that painter or sculptor uses is meagre in comparison with that of words."[26] This demonstrates to us the danger in Wilde's view. Consequently, it is reasonable that Whistler pointed this out. However, he did it at the lecture, in the presence of Wilde. Considering their friendship, what Whistler did showed a lack of consideration for his friend, Wilde. There are other facts that Whistler was vividly aware of about Wilde in this lecture. For example, Whistler asked Archibald Forbes, a British journalist and lecturer, his advice about giving this lecture.[27] When Wilde went to the United States in 1882, Forbes was there at the same time as Wilde and argued with him. Whistler probably had considered asking him about Wilde's strategy for giving lectures. In

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(London: Heinemann, 1994), p. 136.
[25] *ibid.*, p. 144.
[26] Oscar Wilde, "The Critic as Artist", *Works*, p. 1117.
[27] Anderson and Koval, *James McNeill Whistler: Beyond the Myth*, p. 263.

addition, it is said that Wilde's seat was allocated by Whistler in advance.[28] Similarly to Ruskin, Whistler also had been jealous Wilde, an artist of increasing fame.

On the other hand, Wilde felt quite bitter about Whistler's narrow view in his lecture. He says as follows:

> Nor do I accept the dictum that only a painter is a judge of painting. I say that only an artist is a judge of art; there is a wide difference. [...] For there are not many arts, but one art merely – poem, picture and Parthenon, sonnet and statue – all are in their essence the same, and he who knows one knows all.[29]

Wilde appreciates poets as multidisciplinary artists. The word, poet, had meant for Wilde an artist who had the ability to understand everything by imagination and by infinite perspective. It never meant only an occupation in a social category. As compared with Wilde, Whistler cannot help being described as mean and petty. Perhaps this was the point where the views of Wilde and Whistler began to diverge.

As another reason for Whistler's feelings against Wilde, we may point out their attitude towards fashion. It is not difficult to imagine how sensational the verdict of the suit between Whistler and Ruskin was found in those days. Ruskin was an influential art critic because of his critical essays such as "The Seven Lamps of Architecture" (1849) and "The Stones of Venice: vol. I-III" (1851-3). Moreover, he already enjoyed high social status as the Slade professor of fine art at the University of Oxford. Consequently, the fact that Whistler clashed with Ruskin, the dean of the artistic world, seemed to have become the subject of talk. At the same time, Whistler's impressive dandyism, which could even be called eccentricity, probably came up in people's conversation. Quoting Thomas Armstrong, Anne Koval describes his dandy style as being dressed entirely in white duck, wearing a straw hat of an American shape not seen in Europe with a long, black ribbon, and with black, curly hair.[30] It is said that he was up to the ears in debt buying clothes and that this was the reason why he escaped from his home country, the United States, and went to France. In her book, *The Dandy*,[31] Ellen Moers states that after this suit, the climate of anti-dandyism ended in the Victorian era. I do not refer to the influence of Whistler's dandyism on society at that time in detail here. However, at least we may imagine that when Whistler appeared before people, his dandyism left a strong impression on them. He revived dandyism which was epitomised by Beau Brummel (George Bryan Brummel) (1778-1840) and which had become less fashionable since the death of his patron, George IV, in 1830.

Beau Brummel is known as a man who inspired fashion. He established a new style of dress for gentlemen, with a black or navy blue coat and a simple tie. This simple style seemed to counter that of the palace which used an abundance of fur and jewels. There are many examples of his fastidiousness in fashion: he spent hours fastening his tie in front of the mirror; to make gloves fit perfectly on his hands, he hired different glove-makers to make the different fingers. In addition to such peculiar tastes in his appearance, he also used humour and wit as a tool. He despised aristocrats without intelligence and a sense of beauty. As a result, although he was not a person of

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[28] *ibid.*, p. 266.
[29] Oscar Wilde, "Mr Whistler's Ten o'Clock", *Works*, p. 949.
[30] Anne Koval, *Whistler in his Time* (London: Tate Gallery Publications, 1994), pp. 18-9.
[31] Ellen Moers, *The Dandy: Brunmel to Beerbohm* (London: Secker &Warburg, 1960), p. 287.

noble birth, he climbed up the social ladder. It is said that even George IV held him in awe. Such dandyism regained momentum around the time of the suit between Whistler and Ruskin. Holbrook Jackson describes the 1890s with the term, "New Dandyism" in his book and deals with it as a social phenomenon.[32] Moers also introduces us to some examples illustrating this fashion. For example, Edward, Prince of Wales, was greatly interested in a showy style of dress, so that many gentlemen tried to dress in an eccentric fashion. Some playwrights such as Wilde and Bernard Shaw required novel costumes for their plays. Moreover, the weekly magazine, "Vanity Fair", introduced a new column, "The Fashion for Men", by the Man in the Mall in the February issue of 1889.[33]

After the suit, Whistler was declared bankrupt and he left Britain. During his absence, Wilde was regarded as one of those central to the support of the aesthetic movement and as one of the founders of the "New Dandyism". We know this through the comedy, *Patience* (1881) by William Schwenck Gilbert (1836-1911) and Arthur Seymour Sullivan (1842-1900). This play mildly satirised Ruskin, Rossetti, Morris, Burne-Jones, Swinburne, Whistler and Wilde. Wilde wrote to George Grossmith (1847-1912), who played Bunthorne, booking a box at the first performance. It is said that Grossmith began to act the part more and more like Wilde. He is described as an aesthetic poet who creates many kinds of phantoms. This play hit the jackpot and played in Britain, the United States and Australia. Because of it, Wilde entered the limelight. When Wilde went to lecture in New York in 1882, he took some photos of himself dressed in a velveteen jacket, knickerbockers and a pair of silk socks. This style was the same as the costumes in the play, and it was to advertise his lectures. Actually, most of the audience expected Wilde to appear in the style of *Patience*. It was offensive to Whistler that Wilde was hailed as a leader of New Dandyism. He possibly thought that Wilde was only imitating him and thus developed an animosity towards him. In addition, the comedy, *Grasshopper*, in 1877 depicted an eccentric painter, Whistler, as a hero. Perhaps Whistler had been jealous Wilde and as a result, they become less close.

It is true that Wilde dressed very fashionably, but that was not his purpose in itself. Hesketh Pearson introduces Wilde's reference to his caricaturised image in *Patience* as follows:

> [...] Wilde himself did not 'walk down Piccadilly with a poppy or a lily in his mediaeval hand', as Gilbert suggested in *Patience*. 'Anyone could have done that', said Wilde long afterwards. 'The great and difficult thing was what *I* achieved – to make the whole world believe that I had done it.'[34]

He neither completely agreed with New Dandyism as the style of eccentric fashion, exemplified in Whistler's style, nor was he interested in being a pioneer of it. However, he admited with his pluralism that the style was suitable for some people. Therefore, if people thought that Wilde were dressed in that style, it means that they believed in Wilde's tolerance of or understanding of New Dandyism. This demonstrates that

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[32] Holbrook Jackson, *Eighteen Nineties: a review of art and ideas at the close of the nineteenth century* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1939, rpt. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1976)
[33] Moers, *The Dandy: Brummel to Beerbohm*, p. 287.
[34] Pearson, *The Life of Oscar Wilde*, p. 44.

people regarded Wilde as a person with tolerance and a pluralistic viewpoint. As for the scale for his pluralism, it was a "great" thing for him.

6. *Dorian Gray* and Sherlock Holmes

In Wilde's novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Dorian moves into the dark side and acquires the external viewpoint of the dark side. Into this important theme of the second half of this novel, some different elements are introduced apart from the Gothic novels dealt with in Chapter 6. For instance, in Chapter 14 of the novel, there is a scene where Dorian threatens his friend, Alan Campbell, and lets him destroy Basil's body using a scientific method with the chemicals and some iron clamps. Moreover, deceiving his servant and Henry, he attempts to make up an alibi. The combination of science and crime may remind the reader of a detective story. In those days, the development of science helped police with their investigations. At the same time, methods of murder became more complicated, throwing investigators off the scent, and because of their complexity, became the theme of detective stories. The expansion of the colonies also provided stories with overseas backgrounds as the setting for murder. Under these circumstances, it was natural that the stories of Sherlock Holmes were created and became popular amongst the general public. When Wilde wrote about Dorian's crime, he seemed to be conscious of the detective story dealing with science and crime. This is reinforced by the fact that the editor of *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* invited both Wilde and Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) to write a long story.[35] One is *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and the other is *The Sign of Four* (1890) which is the second novel of Holmes. Wilde was certainly conscious of Doyle and his works.

[35] Yamada Masaru, "Mystery", Yamada (ed.) *Osukā Wairudo jiten*, p. 405.

7. The Trials of Wilde

As the friendship between Alfred Douglas and Wilde developed, Douglas often quarrelled with his father, the ninth Marquess of Queensberry. His father was a selfish and unreasonable person who was always fighting with others. For example, he attacked his second son, Percy, who took sides with Douglas, at the corner of the street and was stopped by a policeman. In addition, when his first son Francis (Lord Drumlanrig) was given a seat in the House of Lords, he was jealous of this and sent abusive letters even to Queen Victoria and the Prime Minister, Gladstone.[36] These incidents demonstrate his violent temperament. Because of his abusive character, his wife filed for divorce, and immediately won the case. Hirai Hiroshi says that this trial took only fifteen minutes.[37] It may be argued that the Marquess of Queensberry's loose life was extravagant even for the nineteenth century. He disliked his children because they did not show affection for him, and Douglas believed that his father was the cause of his lack of money. In fact, father and son hated each other.

As Wilde says in *De Profundis*, Douglas ate sumptuous meals, rode in carriages and gambled at Wilde's expense.[38] Wilde hoped to finish with this dissolute life, but it is also true that he enjoyed his life with Douglas. At that time homosexuality flourished at Oxford. It is easy to imagine that they developed their friendship in this way. On the other hand, the Marquess of Queensberry harassed Wilde. He tried to blackmail Wilde with his letters and to interrupt a premiere of his play, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, in 1895. In the same year, he left a card for Wilde at the Albemarle Club in London. On the card was the phrase, "To Oscar Wilde posing as a somdomite." ("somdomite" is a misspelling of *sodomite*.) At that time, homosexuality was a crime. Even in private, it was banned by the Criminal Law Amendment Act, enacted in 1885. Therefore, being called a sodomite in public was a serious slander. Douglas, who had been waiting for an opportunity to beat his father, asked Wilde to sue him. Richard Ellmann refers to Frank Harris saying that Harris and Bernard Shaw advised Wilde not to follow Douglas' suggestion.[39] However, no matter what his friends advised, he agreed to follow Douglas' wishes.

The libel trial was held on 3 April 1895. The attorney for the plaintiff was Sir Edward Clarke (1841-1931) and the counsel for the defence was Edward Henry Carson (1854-1935). On the first day, largely thanks to Clarke's opening statement, Wilde appeared to gain the upper hand. At the questioning of the plaintiff, the counsel for the defendant intended to prove Wilde's immoral character using his letters to Douglas and his novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Wilde confused Carson with his paradoxical literary theory.[40] However, Carson had known Wilde personally since their college days at Oxford. He had found witnesses to testify to homosexual acts by Wilde and used this in the cross-examination of Wilde and in a masterly speech to the jury. Finally, Wilde dropped the charge.

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[36] Hirai, *Osukā Wairudo no shōgai*, p. 107.
[37] *ibid.*, p. 108.
[38] Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde*, pp. 366-84.
[39] *ibid.*, p. 416.
[40] H. Montgomery Hyde (ed.), *The Trials of Oscar Wilde* (London: W. Hodge, 1948); H. Montgomery Hyde, *The Trial of Oscar Wilde* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973); The Stationery Office (ed.), *The Trials of Oscar Wilde* (London: The Stationery Office, 2001); and Merlin Holland, *Irish Peacock & Scarlet Marquess: The Real Trial of Oscar Wilde* (London: Fourth Estate, 2003). In this thesis, information about the court mainly comes from these books and Ellmann's.

Because of the evidence submitted at the trial of the Marquess of Queensberry, Wilde was arrested on a charge of committing an indecent act on 5 April, the same day as the end of the trial of the Marquess of Queensberry. At that time, because of Douglas' extravagance, Wilde had heavy debts. When news of his arrest became known, the creditors rushed to his house in London. His property, such as the manuscripts of his works, his art collection and his letters were auctioned. They were sold at incredibly low prices. For example, Whistler's painting went for six pounds, Charles Ricketts' illustration of "The Portrait of Mr. W. H." for one guinea and a manuscript of Keats' poem for only thirty eight shillings.[41] In addition, many items were stolen in the confusion of the moment. The sum of money raised by the auction was not enough to discharge his liability, so he was declared bankrupt. Generally speaking, people were critical of Wilde. They regarded the Marquess of Queensberry as a father who had saved his son from corruption and Wilde as a despicable man. Because of Wilde's reputation, the runs of his plays, *An Ideal Husband* at the Haymarket Theatre and *The Importance of Being Earnest* at the St. James Theatre, came to an end. This reputation had an adverse influence on the sale of his books. He had no means of making money. His wife had already returned to her family home with their two children. In fact, Wilde was robbed of not only his wealth and prestige but also his family. We can argue that only humiliation was left for him.

After the preliminary trial, the trial itself started on 26 April. Clarke, who had been the attorney for the plaintiff at the trial of the Marquess of Queensberry, agreed to act as advocate for Wilde for nothing. The trial was a repetition of the simple pattern. In fact, the boys called as witnesses revealed their immoral conduct with Wilde, and then the defence insisted that their evidence was unreliable. Usually, sexual intercourse has no witnesses. Therefore, if one person affirms it and another negates it, it is quite difficult for others to decide which is right. In addition, it is easy to imagine that the Marquess of Queensberry piled pressure on the witnesses by the power of money. In the end, the jurors could not arrive at a verdict, and it was decided to have a retrial with another judge and jurors.

Wilde was freed on bail until the second trial, but nowhere was willing to allow him to stay. He was barred by some restaurants and hotels and, finally, went to stay at the house of his mother and elder brother, William Robert Kingsbury Wills Wilde (1852-99) in Chelsea. This elder brother and Oscar Wilde did not have a warm relationship, but at this time, William accepted Oscar. On 20 May, his second trial started. At first, he was destined to be tried with a pimp of male prostitutes, Alfred Taylor. However, Clarke's plea that they should be tried separately was accepted, and Taylor's trial was held before Wilde's. On 22 May, Wilde's trial actually began. Many boys were called by the prosecution and again questioned. The pattern was similar to the first trial. Amongst them, there were two different kinds of witnesses. One was Edward Shelley, who was a member of a publishing house, and the other was a maid at the Savoy Hotel. We can argue that they were full-time workers, so the jurors regarded their testimony as more important than male prostitutes. However, confidence in them began to waver. Clarke maintained that Shelley had a mild neurosis, and his exciting testimony was caused by his lack of cool judgement. He also insisted that the maid's testimony was doubtful because of her bad eyesight. On the other hand, the prosecution could not offer a counter-argument against these points. In the final summing-up, Clarke objected to the method of the prosecution, who called

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[41] Hirai, *Osukā Wairudo no shōgai*, p. 157.

irresponsible people as important witnesses. On the other hand, the prosecution could only condemn the indecency of Wilde's letter to Douglas.

Most people in the court imagined that the jurors would acquit Wilde of the charge or at least they could not arrive at a verdict. One of the Treasury counsels said, "That means an acquittal!" Even the prosecutor, Sir Frank Lockwood (1847-97) remarked to Clarke, "You'll dine your man in Paris tomorrow."[42] However, the jurors found Wilde guilty. It can be said this was the result of social prejudice against Wilde. In his works, he frequently accused English society in the nineteenth century of fraud and rose to become a popular writer through his wit. Therefore, once he was arrested, he was disliked not only by aristocrats as a social climber involved in scandal, but also by working-class people as a hedonist. It is said that to arouse interest the newspapers considered him and even his works guilty before the judgement was reached. As a result, they fanned the ill feeling of the public towards Wilde.[43] Magazines such as *Punch* dealt with him in a similar way. It is certain that these circumstances influenced the jurors' judgement. Moreover, it is easy to imagine that it required a great deal of bravery to resist this climate of public opinion. This is also applicable to the judge.

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[42] Hyde, *The Trials of Oscar Wilde*, p. 269.
[43] Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde*, p. 446.

8. The Concept of the "Anonymous Christian"

At the Second Vatican Council held by John XXIII, the pluralistic viewpoint of Leo XIII's was put in statutory form. This council developed the Vatican I held by Pius IX, which was interrupted by the Franco-Prussian War (1870). At the Vatican II, the concept of the "Anonymous Christian" was used to theorise this pluralistic viewpoint. This concept was submitted by a German theologian, Karl Rahner (1904-84). He says that if someone's life deserves salvation from a Christian viewpoint, even though s/he is not conscious of it, s/he reserves it by the workings of Christ and the Holy Spirit.[44] This is one of the central ideas of Catholicism, and following this, *Constitutio Dogmatica de Ecclesia* [Dogmatic Constitution on the Church] *(Lumen Gentium)* says:

> All men are called to belong to the new People of God.[45]
>
> There is furthermore a sharing in prayer and spiritual benefits; these Christians are indeed in some real way joined to us in the Holy Spirit for, by his gifts and graces, his sanctifying power is also active in them and he has strengthened some of them even to the shedding of their blood. And so the Spirit stirs up desires and actions in all of Christ's disciples in order that all may be peaceably united, as Christ ordained, in one flock under one shepherd.[46]
>
> Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience – those too many achieve eternal salvation.[47]

This pluralistic idea is also dealt with in other official documents of Vatican II, such as *Constitutio Pastorals de Ecclesia in Mundo Huius Temporis (Gaudium et Spes)* and *Decretum de Activitate Missionali Ecclesiae (Ad Gentes)*. In addition, *Dominus Iesus* (2000), the declaration by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of the Holy See, deals with this idea.[48] It can be said that this pluralistic approach is very important for Catholicism. It has also been forcefully discussed by scholars such as Paul Knitter and John Hick, addressing the issue of the interactive relationship of religions.[49]

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[44] Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations,* Vol. 16, translated by David Morland (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1979), pp. 57-8. In other works, he frequently refers to this concept.
[45] Paulus Episcopus, "Constitutio Dogmatica de Ecclesia" [Dogmatic Constitution on the Church], Austin Flannery (ed.), *Vatican II on the Church*, translated by Fr. Christopher O Donnell (Dublin: Scepter Books, 1966, rpt. 1967), p. 201.
[46] *ibid.*, p. 207.
[47] *ibid.*, p. 209.
[48] Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *"Dominus Iesus" on the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2000), esp. Chapter III, pp. 17-20.
[49] Paul F. Knitter, "Catholic Theology of Religions at a Crossroads", in *Concilium,* Vol. 183 (London: SCM Press, 1986), pp. 99-107; and John Hick and Paul F. Knitter (eds.), *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness* (London: SCM Press, 1987, rpt. 1988).

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